DECEMBER 1960

Commentary

AMITAI ETZIONI: **NEO-LIBERALISM—THE TURN OF THE 60'S**

MIDGE DECTER: **THE LEGACY OF HENRIETTA SZOLD**

DAVID MARQUAND: **ENGLAND'S LABOR PARTY & ITS DISCONTENTS**

NORMAN STEIN: **THE COMPREHENSIVE INCUBUS—A Story**

SAUL GOODMAN: **SIMON DUBNOW—A REVALUATION**

EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG: **TRUTH: UPPER, MIDDLE & LOWER**

PAUL GOODMAN

THE HUMAN USES OF SCIENCE

OBSERVATIONS

Theodore Frankel: **German Fiction & the Quest for Purification**

IN THE COMMUNITY

Milton Himmelfarb: **Bloc Voting, Unity, Prayers**

CONTROVERSY

Edwin M. Schur & Critics: **Drug Addiction**

BOOKS IN REVIEW Theodore Solotaroff Lucy S. Dawidowicz Alfred Werner Dennis H. Wrong Walter Schwarz Kenneth Keniston

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE 60c

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Of the greatest value."*

The Jews

THEIR HISTORY, CULTURE and RELIGION

THIRD EDITION

Edited by LOUIS FINKELSTEIN
Chancellor, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America

Forty eminent scholars, each an expert of world reknown in his area, and the distinguished editor provide the only modern and complete historical treatment of Jewry. It is a superb work, rich in information and beautifully produced. THE JEWS is a work of magnitude as a force for deeper and better understanding of the Jewish cultural and religious contribution to mankind.

The third edition has been painstakingly revised, and enlarged by 500 pages, to include the most up-to-date information.

". . . a notable contribution."—HON. HERBERT H. LEHMAN

"It will make available to Jew and non-Jew alike a wealth of information the value of which one can hardly exaggerate."—DR. GEORGE N. SHUSTER

**Hon. Avraham Harman*

Illustrated. Maps. 1859 pages

Two volumes, boxed. $27.50 at all bookstores

HARPER & BROTHERS • NEW YORK 16

IS YOUR CHILD COLLEGE MATERIAL?

That depends. By today's standards, he probably is. By standards ten years from now, perhaps not. How can that be? Is his I. Q. likely to change? No. But conditions are.

Many college classrooms are crowded *today*. By 1967, applications are expected to double. Low salaries are driving too many qualified teachers into other fields.

By the time your child reaches eighteen, there may not be any room for him in *any* college.

This is a frightening situation. Now is the time to put a stop to it. Help the college or university of your choice *now*. The rewards will be greater than you think.

If you want to know more about what the college crisis means to you and to your children, write for a free booklet to: HIGHER EDUCATION, Box 36 Times Square Station, New York 36, New York.

Published as a public service in coop-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, *the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture.*

The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY'S *contributors and editors are their own; and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of* COMMENTARY *by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.*

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
HERBERT B. EHRMANN, *President*

THE COMMENTARY PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

RALPH E. SAMUEL, *Chairman*

CHARLES D. BREITEL RICHARD C. ERNST ALBERT FURTH
MAURICE GLINERT SYDNEY M. KAYE EDWARD KUHN, JR.
LEWIS J. LAVENTHOL HAROLD MANHEIM PEARSON E. NEAMAN
DAVID SHER HARRY STEINER ALAN M. STROOCK BEN TOUSTER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Jewish girl's
moving "little history" of the
German occupation of Holland

MARGA MINCO'S

Bitter Herbs

"The author's talent is revealed in the effect which her 'dry' notes produce . . . by the force with which she manages to lend an air of reality to the small details, the conversations, the apparently unstressed attitudes and gestures." — *The Times Literary Supplement.* Illustrated. $2.50 *at all bookstores.*

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
16-00 Pollitt Drive, Fair Lawn, N. J.

The associate counsel
for the defense of
Sacco and Vanzetti
presents the evidence
— ignored by Judge Thayer —
of the guilt of the Morelli
Gang in this tragic case.

THE UNTRIED CASE

By HERBERT B. EHRMANN
President, American Jewish Committee

Foreword by Joseph N. Welch

Introduction by Professor Edmund M. Morgan, Royall Professor of Law Emeritus, Harvard University

In this new edition of his powerful book, Attorney Ehrmann offers the solution to a mystery that has never ceased to torment men of good will. But, most important perhaps, is the book's unspoken tribute to "something in the conscience of freedom that will not allow its defeats to be peacefully interred." — STANLEY D. METZGER, *Georgetown University Law Center.* $3.95

THE VANGUARD PRESS, INC., New York 17

JEWISH NEWSLETTER

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Roger N. Baldwin — Dwight Macdonald
Abraham Cronbach — Louis Nelson
Erich Fromm — Jacob Panken
Herman A. Gray — Don Peretz
J. B. S. Hardman — David Riesman
William Hubben — Richard E. Singer
Morris S. Lazaron — Norman Thomas
William Zukerman, Editor

The *Jewish Newsletter* has no creed other than the belief that the need to dissent is one of the great imperatives in a free society, especially in a time such as ours, heavily weighted toward totalitarianism in thought, chauvinism in emotions and conformity in action.

Therefore, the *Jewish Newsletter* follows an editorial policy of encouraging independence of thought in dealing with Jewish problems, of stimulating criticism, self-criticism and free discussion, and of stressing the need of non-conformity to counteract the bandwagons and "Yes" men of the period.

To introduce you to this unconventional publication, we shall be glad to send you FREE introductory copies on request. Please write to

▼

P.O. Box 117
Washington Bridge Station
New York 33, N. Y.

Subscription Rates: $5 per year; $3 half year.

Announcing
the "Cuba Issue" of . . .

STUDIES ON THE LEFT*

a journal of research, social theory, and review

ON CUBA: Jean Paul Sartre, "Ideology and Revolution"
Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Selected Writings and Speeches
Saul Landau, Review-Essay of Huberman and Sweezy's CUBA: ANATOMY OF A REVOLUTION and C. Wright Mills' LISTEN YANKEE!

ALSO: Martin J. Sklar, "Woodrow Wilson and the Political Economy of Modern U.S. Liberalism"
Hans Freistadt, "Modern Marxism and Modern Science"

See A. Hacker's review in November COMMENTARY

Mail to:
STUDIES ON THE LEFT
P.O. Box 2121, Madison 5, Wis.

I enclose 85¢ plus 15¢ handling for issue #3, the "Cuba Issue".
Enclosed is $2.50 ($3 foreign) for a subscription.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

DECEMBER 1960
NUMBER 6
VOLUME 30

The Human Uses of Science 461 PAUL GOODMAN

Neo-Liberalism—The Turn of the 60's 473 AMITAI ETZIONI

The Legacy of Henrietta Szold 480 MIDGE DECTER

England's Labor Party & Its Discontents 489 DAVID MARQUAND

A Story The Comprehensive Incubus 497 NORMAN STEIN

Simon Dubnow — A Revaluation 511 SAUL GOODMAN

Truth: Upper, Middle & Lower 516 EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG

Observations German Fiction & Purification 524 THEODORE FRANKEL

In the Community Bloc Voting, Unity, Prayers 528 MILTON HIMMELFARB

Controversy Drug Addiction 531 EDWIN M. SCHUR & CRITICS

Letters from Readers 536

Books in Review

American Communism & Soviet Russia, by Theodore Draper 540 DENNIS H. WRONG

Vienna & the Young Hitler, by William A. Jenks; A Study in Austrian Intellectual History, by Robert A. Kann 541 ALFRED WERNER

Inner Conflict and Defense, by Daniel R. Miller and Guy E. Swanson 544 KENNETH KENISTON

The Jews in Our Time, by Norman Bentwich 546 LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

The Last of the Just, by André Schwarz-Bart 548 THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

A Nation Reborn, by Richard H. S. Crossman 551 WALTER SCHWARZ

Editor: NORMAN PODHORETZ

Managing Editor
SHERRY ABEL

Associate Editors
HARRIS DIENSTFREY
THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

Contributing Editors
MILTON HIMMELFARB
GEORGE LICHTHEIM

Editorial Secretary
BRENDA BROWN

General Manager: FRANCES GREEN

Advertising
DOROTHY PUTNEY

COMMENTARY is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee • Single copy 60¢; $7 a year; 2 years $12; 3 years $17 • No extra Canadian or foreign postage charge • Editorial & Business offices: 165 East 56th Street, New York 22 • Printed at 10 McGovern Avenue, Lancaster, Pa. by Business Press, Inc. • Second class postage paid at Lancaster •

Copyright 1960 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions •

Indexed in Readers' Guide & Public Affairs Information Service • Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Have fun in the Snow and Sun of La Province de Québec

Enjoy a ski vacation in French-Canada where the snow is deep, the air is dry, the sun is bright. You will be welcomed with real old-time hospitality in comfortable modern inns and hotels.

For free road map and booklet "SKI IN QUEBEC", send in coupon below, or apply to the Provincial Tourist Bureau, 48 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y.

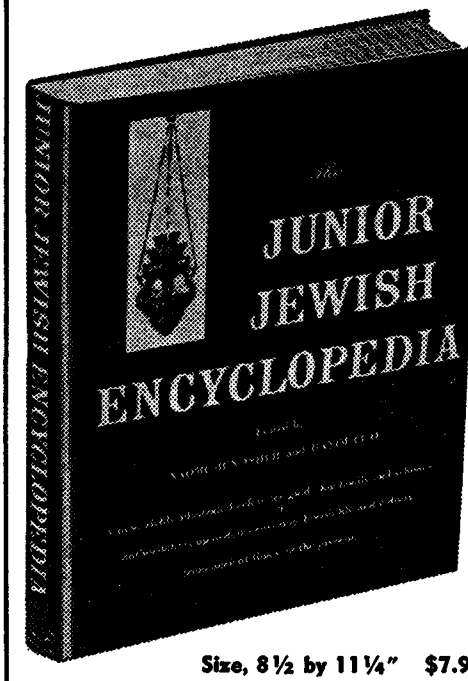
LA PROVINCE DE **Québec**

Provincial Tourist Bureau,
710 Grande-Allée East, Dept. 66J
Québec City, Canada.
Please send me FREE booklets to help plan my winter vacation in La Province de Québec.

My main interest is .....
Name .....
Street .....
City ..... State .....

Just Published

The 4th Revised Edition



Size, 8½ by 11¼" $7.95

A perfect Gift Book

Award Winner of
The Jewish Book Council of America

The most authoritative, up-to-date and lavishly illustrated ONE-VOLUME reference work.

Designed for the needs of the whole family.

"A pioneering effort, this prize winning compendium of valuable information for young people is a gem. It is beautifully illustrated, thoroughly authentic, and so comprehensive in scope that it will prove tempting to adults who want data or who just like to pore over an attractive book"

— American Judaism

Shengold Publishers, Inc.
45 West 45th St., New York 36, N. Y.

Please send me ..... copies of The Junior Jewish Encyclopedia. I enclose $7.95 for each copy.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Add 3% sales tax in N.Y.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Human Uses of Science

PAUL GOODMAN

In the present round of the century-old debate between Science and the Humanities, the humanities are a weak opponent. They are not sure of what they are and they do not seem to have much of use to offer. Whereas science looms in the fullness of success; it has made new advances in theory and its technological applications have transformed the world. Yet the sad irony is that, perhaps just because our humanities are so weak, we have been losing many basic humane values of science itself. Having lost our firm credulity about what man "is" and what society is "for," we have become confused indeed about utility, efficiency, relevance, understanding. The usual admonitions that we must master the machine and become a truly scientific society are by now very impracticable. What would be the criteria of a scientific way of life?

It is not an academic question. In this essay I want to analyze two kinds of confusion that the scientific camp suffers from. There is a confusion between science and technology—this is glaringly displayed by such a spokesman as C. P. Snow in his recent lecture *The Two Cultures*. And there exists a confusion in both the popular and the scientific mind —though of course differently—between science and what has to be called magic and superstition. Now these confusions are socially disastrous. They cost us billions in social wealth, they damage backward peoples and retard their progress from poverty, they jeopardize our safety, and they distort the education of the next generation.

* * *

There has always been an intimate and mutually causal relation between science and technology. Let me give only spectacular modern examples. It was a problem of navigation that first led to the momentous measurement of the speed of light. The study of thermodynamics, by Carnot, Joule, Kelvin, grew from experience of steam engines, was advanced by working on practical problems of steam engines, and led to discoveries in refrigeration. Darwin's proof of evolution through natural selection relied heavily on experience of breeding livestock, while Mendel's studies in genetics have led to endless uses in agriculture. At present the very word "technology" is used not so much to refer to practical arts as to the application of fairly up-to-date scientific concepts to the mass production of goods and services. It would be awkward to call carpentry "technology," and it would be wrong to call medicine "technology"; but wallboard, canned foods, ship-radar, or the manufacture—and prescription?—of penicillin, are parts of our technology. Marxist philosophers have insisted on an indissoluble relation, if not formal identity,

PAUL GOODMAN has worked in the "humane technologies"—as he describes them—of city-planning and psychotherapy. His most recent book is *Growing Up Absurd* (Random House).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between science and technology, and *in a background sense* this is true. Especially experimental science would not much exist among peoples who lack elaborate industrial arts; they would not have the data, they would not have the techniques, and they would not believe it important. (But such peoples might be excellent naturalists and mathematicians, like the Greeks; and in social psychology, with its techniques of rhetoric and pedagogy, all peoples, of course, have plenty of experimental evidence—a point often overlooked.)

Yet it is dangerous to confuse science and technology. Confusion arises when contemporary science and the present stage of technology come to exist in people's minds as one block, to be necessarily taken as a single whole. And the effect of this is that rhetorical arguments for some kind or complex of technology, which indeed has been made possible by modern science, are unfairly strengthened by the moral excellence, the prestige, and the superstition of modern science itself. Contrariwise, anybody who opposes the mass production, the export to underdeveloped countries, or the widespread domestic use of certain machines or technical complexes or therapies, is sure to be "refuted" as an obscurantist, an irrationalist or aesthete, a pessimist or a Luddite. Because the adventure of modern science must be pursued, it is concluded that there are no choices in the adoption of scientific technology. This is an error in reasoning; but unfortunately, there are powerful vested interests in business and politics throughout the world, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, that want to reinforce this error.

The criteria for the practice of science and the practice of technology are distinct. It is possible to affirm that the most absolute freedom and encouragement—including a blank check—should be given to the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and yet that the mass application of this knowledge to industrial arts, communications, medicine, etc. should be highly selective and discriminating, and even, under modern conditions, rather grudging in many departments and in many regions. I wish to affirm both propositions, and go on to suggest some political, moral, and psychological criteria for choosing a technology. (What an odd sound such a reasonable proposal has today!)

My reasons for praising science are, of course, the classical ones, but let me spell them out for the pleasure of it. The pursuit of natural truth is a noble good that justifies itself, like compassion, social justice, fine art, or romantic love; no superior standard exists by which to limit such pursuits, even though the sky falls. The life of research is one of the forms of human happiness. The submission of the intellect to nature is a kind of humble prayer. The scientific habits are positive virtues; and, negatively, science is the chief antidote to illusion, prejudice, and superstition. The adventure of discovery is itself romantic and delights the animal spirits; conversely, any restriction of curiosity and inquiry very soon proves to be psychologically depressing and anxious-making, and morally disastrous, leading to trickery and lies. Sometimes we may fear that, like love, justice, or art, the discovery of truth is dangerous or inopportune; nevertheless we must risk it.

I have not mentioned the final proposition in the classical eulogy: that science is useful, it finds out all kinds of things for the general welfare. Isn't it strange that just in our times thoughtful people might, on reflection, deny this? "The invention of flight, for example," says John Ullman of Stevens Institute, "is probably, on balance, a curse." From Hiroshima on, many scientists, for instance those associated with the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* have shouldered responsibility for the spectacularly evil consequences of their work. This certainly does not mean that they give up studying nuclear physics; it does mean that they try to select and control the technical applications.

As soon as we turn to the technological

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

applications, we have left the absolute and are in the realm of prudence and choice, we weigh and balance values, we try to take account of consequences, we realize that consequences are often incalculable. And yet—apart from the recent cases of the bombs and fall-out, some smoke control, and the traditional caution of medical men—there have been almost no criteria in this field beyond cost and marketability! On the contrary, the policy in advanced countries has been "as much as possible of all the latest things," and the policy in backward countries is now, "all of it, as quickly as possible." Yet these things determine our ways of life. Ideally we should pay the most serious attention to selecting each particular innovation and to continually reviewing the technology we have. At the least we should be ruthless in calling a halt to the further proliferation of those machines and their complexes that have demonstrably become ruinous, like the cars and roads.

START with the criterion of utility. To examine it, consider the limiting case of Afro-Asian regions of dire poverty and drudgery, populous and industrially backward. What capital and technicians are useful for them?

The demand of the (Western-trained) leaders in these regions—it is hard to know what the *people* would choose—is to industrialize totally, on advanced Western models, as quickly as possible, and so attain the American standard of living. The policy to accomplish this may be to concentrate at once on heavy industry, steel mills, machine tools; or less radically, to devote part of the production to native goods for export, to build up a balance of trade. Either way, the policy means hard work without immediate rewards, curtailment of consumption, a stringent and likely totalitarian dictatorship both for work-discipline and for very long range planning, the corresponding increase of the bureaucracy, the enforcing of completely new work habits, the disruption of age-old community forms, occasional famines, sometimes the need to repress tribal revolts. Further, there is bound to be over-investment in immense mistakes; nor would it be surprising if, at the end of the process, much has been created that is already outmoded, and even more that does not, after all, suit the native conditions, materials, and uses. All this could be documented again and again from the history of the industrialization of Russia, China, India, the Congo, etc., etc.

Surely this policy is an illusion sprung from a superstitious notion of what it means to be modern and scientific. Naturally it is abetted by foreign promoters who are interested in exporting pipelines, mining machinery, and paved roads. But also governments and international agencies, claiming to have only benevolent aims, willingly go along with it. Yet if there were no wish to make profits or wield political influence, it would certainly be more useful to restrict the import of technology specifically to the maximum mass production of basic subsistence—food, clothing, shelter, and medicine: to give as soon as possible a self-supporting livelihood. And otherwise hands off! This would be a far cheaper gift, and in the long run would be a safer investment. People would be better off almost at once and then could think up the advantages that come marginally next in order. They could make their own community adjustments to the new conditions. In the production of subsistence there cannot be great mistakes, for people know the values. Less prior training is required. Less is wasted on politicians and policemen; it is more difficult for grafters to take their toll. People come to a higher standard according to their own style and choice and therefore can develop a living culture. And the relation of means and end is fairly direct, so people are not mystified.

For such a policy, the primary technicians required are geographers and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

physicians, to ascertain the health and resources of each region; then engineers and anthropologically trained craftsmen-teachers and agronomists. (Perhaps even literacy is not so indispensable.) There is not so much need for geologists, metallurgists, etc., nor for economists and urbanists. And no need at all for geo-politicians, promoters, and commissars.

If we turn, next, to our own, the most advanced country, the need for selection is even more obvious, though less drastic. It is now generally conceded that much of our production and consumption is useless, of poor quality, wasteful and demoralizing (although *economically,* let us remember, 30 per cent of our people live in hardship). Then in discussing the Affluent Society, let us by-pass utility, as a familiar topic, and talk about other criteria.

Efficiency, among us, tends to be measured solely in terms of a particular machine (e.g. gasoline per mile) or in terms of a particular complex of industrial operations (e.g. using the by-products). But if we look at our production more philosophically, in larger wholes and more remote effects, we see that some of our most cherished technical assumptions lead to inefficiency. For instance, by the evident principle that as the unit-cost of production falls, the unit-cost of distribution rises, it is likely that much of the vast technology of food processing and transportation is inefficient. Back in the 30's when times were harder, Ralph Borsodi showed experimentally that, using domestic electrical apparatus, it was cheaper in hours and minutes of effort to grow and can one's own tomatoes than to buy the national brands—not to speak of the quality; other items (e.g. wheat and bread) were cheaper not on an individual but on a small cooperative basis; and still other items were cheaper maximum-mass-produced and nationally distributed. My conclusion is not that we ought to produce every item in the most efficient way—we have a surplus and it is not necessary for us to be that efficient—but rather that, since our economists do not habitually make this kind of accounting, our national housekeeping has become slovenly. Because of our slovenliness we fall in bondage to the supermarket and cannot get a cooperative movement going as in Scandinavia; and therefore the quality of our goods is inferior to the Scandinavian.

Similarly it can be demonstrated that, except in highly automated factories where labor-cost is small compared to fixed capital, or in heavy mining attached to its site, for the most part large industrial plants and concentrations of industry are less efficient than smaller ones that assemble parts machined in small shops (e.g., it is cheaper to transport the parts than the workers). Certainly in the layout of our cities, almost any kind of neighborhood plan and community-centered production would be far more efficient than our suburbs and commutation. A more human-scaled production has obvious political and cultural advantages; it allows for more flexible planning, it is more conducive to scientific education and invention. We complain of the deadening centralism and conformity, and we put up with them because they are efficient. But they are inefficient.

We hear rhetoric on the theme of learning to master the machine lest the machine master us. Let us consider a couple of criteria for the selection of technology and the users of technology, that directly address this problem. If possible, the operation of a machine should be transparent and comprehensible to its users. This can be aided by the design and casing of the machine and the education of the users. Consider the important corollary that a machine ought to be repairable by its user. Our present plight is that, in the use of cars, telephones, electricity and gas systems, radio equipment, refrigeration, etc., etc., the mass of people are in bondage to a system of servicemen for even trivial repairs. The servicemen notoriously take advantage of the situation,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but much worse is the increasing tendency of the manufacturers to build obsolescence and non-repairability *into* the machinery. (This is a negative criterion indeed! But it is inevitable that a caste possessing mysterious knowledge will shear the sheep.) Psychologically, we have developed an anxious climate in which we don't know how to buy because we can't judge quality. It would be very different if we began to introduce the convention that a consumer must learn to take apart a machine and know how it works, before he is permitted to buy it—much as some of us still frown on an adolescent who cannot fix his broken bicycle. To make an analogy: considering the vast quantity of cars and mileage, there are remarkably few accidents, but this is because Americans have been tested and know how to drive.

Fifty years ago, the twin ideas of Progressive Education (learning by doing) and Functionalism in planning and design, were matured to meet just this problem of making people more adequate to their new technological means, and of molding the new means into a shape and style more able to be grasped by people. Both movements were criticized as anti-humanistic, as abandoning classical education and traditional canons of beauty. But their principle was precisely humanistic, to re-integrate the new scientific specialism with the common intellectual and moral life.

Let me now spend a paragraph on the idea of Functionalism, because it is still not properly understood. The aim of functional design is *not* to make a home look like a factory, but to find a style in which the homes and factories can be comprehended as one city; it is a classical aim. The functioning of a home will make it look different from a factory, but the practical relation of the home to the factory—e.g. that the men work at the factory—must also be functionally designed, and this will unify the variety in a clear and living expression that the mind and eye can follow with increasing comprehension and joy. As so-called "functional" planning has over-matured and become rotten, however, we find that homes, offices, universities, and factories have all come to look the same and not particularly *like* anything; while the community relation among them is not designed at all—there is no city but only "urbanism." What they all do express is packaging for public relations and sales. (Alas! is this the scientific American standard that the underdeveloped regions aspire to?) Similarly, the rotten stage of progressive education has come to teach, not how to test and handle the material and social environment on one's own terms or to change it for the better, but how to become socialized to it.

Patrick Geddes was a champion of those twin ideals of fifty years ago, and he also advocated a selection of technology. He was in the moral tradition of Ruskin, but himself a scientist and friendly to science. Geddes imagined that history was on his side, for the "neo-technology" of electricity had come to replace the "paleo-technology" of coal and steam. Electricity satisfied the criterion of cleanliness, so that we could reject the ugly black concentrations of the 19th century; and it was easily transmissible to give ubiquitous sources of power, so that we could either reject concentration altogether or choose it for non-technical purposes, e.g. for the culture of cities (the phrase is Lewis Mumford's). Some of what Geddes hoped for has come about; but on the whole the "forces of history" have not given good planning, in the absence of positive political and moral selection. And by a melancholy irony—history is good at creating melancholy irony—some of us followers of Geddes wryly praise the hideous old slums over the neo-technological slums, for they had more human scale and pullulation of life.

Finally, consider some uncritical applications of science in biology and psychology. The most obvious illustration is the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

craze for antibiotic drugs. These have been mass-produced and promoted—with a simply fascinating lack of reduction in price—with a now conceded disregard of the organism as a whole. A powerful therapy, indicated for emergencies (e.g. for a dangerous mastoiditis), is used for a quick cure of minor or systemic infections (and a child so treated for numerous earaches may end up deaf). Or, central-system sedatives and tranquilizers are administered that by-pass malnutrition, bad living habits, and bad environment. Meantime, the scientific "untechnological" tradition of medicine from Hippocrates on—diet, exercise, natural living, airs, and places—is quite neglected, and the crucial factor of resistance to disease, the profoundest secret in medicine (just as prevention is its glory), is not studied. Instead, mass-immunity to a host of particular symptoms is the sought-for goal, although almost certainly the optimum possible health of each individual organism is being sacrificed. But the aim of medicine is not, as such, to increase the average life-span of a population—a person can be kept alive as a vegetable for years—but to foster the quality of life. If we want a single word for the criterion of selection here being absurd, it is, perhaps, relevance to the thing being treated.

The irrelevant application of technology to psychology is too rich to cope with, it would carry us away. Let me simply mention a few typical items. Dr. Skinner of Harvard has invented a machine that is useful for investigating responses to stimuli, so it is now at once proposed to mass-produce it as a teaching-machine, although it is quite irrelevant to the chief factors in either teaching or learning. Or, a new computer is installed in Iowa that can score millions of standard tests in practically no time at all, so my boy's class is interrupted to take these tests, and I predict that the curriculum will be subtly modified for the convenience of the scoring. Or, in a town in Maine a well-financed research project, involving seventeen variables and plenty of work for the rented computer, discovers that boys tend to elect shop and girls tend to elect cooking; the author of the report comments, "We used to think that this was so, now we know." How shall we name the criterion that is here being violated?

Perhaps the needed criterion is modesty: to have as few of any machines, methods, products (and research projects) as possible. In any region the space is limited; the people are tending to multiply; but the machines and what belongs to the machines have multiplied still more, with overpowering effect. The bridges and roads are more impressive than the rivers they span and the places they connect, but they are less interesting. Most immodest of all, of course, are the techniques of communication that have cluttered up the void and silence with images and words. It is now the rule that books are written to keep presses running, and the more radio channels we tap, the more drivel will be invented to broadcast.

Thus I have touched on half a dozen criteria for the humane selection of a technology: utility, efficiency, comprehensibility and repairability, ease and flexibility of use, relevance, cleanliness and elegance, and modesty. These criteria are esteemed by scientists and engineers; they are common ground between science and the humanities; they do not entail any conflict. Why are they not generally evident in our "scientific" society? I have purposely chosen only large and economically important examples: the type of foreign aid, the planning and distribution of cities, the organization of production, the American standard of living and public health, the methods of education. To repeat, the question of humane criteria in scientific technology is not an academic issue.

RETURN NOW to the thread of our argument, the confusion of science and technology and the powerful rhetoric of referring to them as one block. This rhetoric becomes explicit when a group that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is interested in promoting a particular technology is opposed. Thus the big drug companies, being investigated for their outrageous pricing and monopolistic stifling of small competitors, have righteously exclaimed that without their methods of mass production and promotion and pricing, scientific research comes to an end—there will be no more Listers and Pasteurs! Equally far-fetched is the uncriticized assumption of all the large suppliers of scientific technology that they alone are the right sponsors, champions, and entrepreneurs of scientific thought and research: this gives them the license to raid the universities for talent, to fill the public schools with their brochures, to influence the appropriation of school funds, to get tax-exemptions for "scientific" foundations that are really parts of the firm, and even to dictate the lines of further research and sometimes actively to discourage "unprofitable" lines of research. In foreign aid and the export of capital, firms that have equipment to sell, and materials and fuels to buy, are wonderfully persuasive about helping backward societies to become modern scientific societies. The Pentagon also is an enthusiastic advocate and underwriter of pure research—though not especially on the genetic effects of radioactive fall-out.

For a couple of hundred years, our proliferating technologies have been selected on the criteria of marketability and profitability, and by and large the market has had some regard for usefulness and efficiency. (But not invariably. Moral economists like Ned Ludd and Coleridge, Ruskin and Ebenezer Howard have been critical for the same two centuries.) In the past fifty years, however, new conditions have developed that are unambiguously harmful. There has been systematic corruption of the public notion of what *is* useful. (An early typical example was the campaign that put across bleached flour as tastier and more "refined," since it spoiled less in the grain elevators.) The growing public ineptitude and ignorance, and a growing mystique of technical experts, have made any rational restraint difficult. And finally, by an inevitable reflex, the stream of science itself is channeled and hampered by the too abundant technology that it has created.

THIS, I submit, is the context of the current debate about education. Then it is dismaying to read arguments, like C. P. Snow's, from the "scientific point of view," that completely disregard it. Snow is so puffed up with the importance of science in its technical applications that he fails to ask any scientific questions, or to have any qualms of scientific conscience. Apparently some scientists feel so grand about being on the governing board that they are stone-blind to the evident fact that they are not the makers of policy. E.g., is it by their choice as *scientists* that scientific knowledge is kept secret? Are they satisfied as scientists that space-exploration has so speedily become a means of spying that Russians and Americans cannot cooperate as well as honorably compete? (It is said that at present our instruments for gathering information are superior, but the Russian rockets can carry more pay-load: now, *what* would be logical? *who* is proposing it?) "The sciences," wrote Jenner—to Paris in 1803!—"are never at war." This follows from the essence of science as a consensus of all possible observers.

But perhaps this is the kind of wisdom to be got through the humanities.

The fact that just now scientific technology is controlling, abusing, and threatening to devastate mankind is neither here nor there as an argument for how we should educate our youth to make a better world. There were long periods when priests had power, other periods when soldiers had it, and even periods when literary mandarins had it. All of them did useful things and all of them made a mess. So I would propose that scientists think twice about what kind of power they have, what they are cooperating with, and with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whom, and try a little harder to know themselves. There is a well-known humanistic technique for this chastening enterprise, the method of Socrates. (Psychotherapy is one of its modern branches.) A little history, too, should be a required course.*

LET us turn to a little history. A hundred years ago when Matthew Arnold was arguing with T. H. Huxley on this same subject, the cultural climate was different not only in that scientific technology had not yet spread so triumphantly over the globe, but also in that England was still somewhat a "Christian country." Arnold could rely heavily on tradition and sentiment and arguments about conduct and character. Now there is no doubt that in our times "Science" has become the dominant belief of men, replacing Christianity and many other faiths. It is now the scientists who rely on assumptions of tradition, sentiment, and right conduct. I think it is necessary to explore this deeper issue in order to explain the uncritical acceptance of the technical fruits of science; for radically new ways of behavior require profound changes in popular belief (as Max Weber, e.g., explored the new beliefs of the Reformation in order to locate the attitudes necessary for capitalist production and re-investment).

In my opinion, science has become a superstition for both the mass of the people and the scientists. For the mass it has the power of magic. For the scientists it has the exclusive virtue of an orthodox theology.

Roughly defined, magic is the power of affecting material nature by occult means known to a caste of specialists. Let us recall that from deep in the Middle Ages—perhaps earlier—the practice of experimental science was popularly linked with magic rather than with the philosophic quest for truth or the immediate utility of industrial arts. The typical figure is Roger Bacon. People have always had a rational respect, sometimes good-humored, for the savant or contemplative natural philosopher; but experimental science is dangerous in its nature, for if the systematic observation and manipulation of matter can elicit truth, the discovered truth can be used to manipulate matter. And indeed, the early experimentalists were afraid of themselves; for instance, the great alchemists insisted that pure motives and a religious life were essential to the work; and there was a history and literature of charlatans, sorcerer's-apprentices, and mad scientists.

We have poor memories and we no longer keep in mind that Christianity, at least, thrived greatly by its sacramental magic, its relics, and its miracle-workers;

* Let me say that I myself have never been able to distinguish between "science" and the "humanities"—perhaps this is *my* blind spot. The reasons for the absolute autonomy and even pre-eminence of science, that I listed above, are all humanistic reasons, they are what belong to a whole, free, risky human existence. The moral criteria for selecting and refining an industrial society, that were listed above, are common to scientists and humanists, they are philosophic. If scientists do not think in these terms about technology, it is that they have lost touch with common sense; if humanists do not think about technology at all, it is that they have become withdrawn and therefore stupid. But finally—and this is a point that most scientists and many modern literary critics are singularly unaware of—the chief content of literature is itself scientific, it is the worldly wisdom and "criticism of life" of good observers who, *in the field of human relations,* had plenty of empirical experience. If the classics of literature do not much state summary propositions like studies in sociology and psychology, but rather have the complex density of poems and plays, it is because the subject matter of human conduct requires this density of statement; it is notoriously missed and distorted by less concrete language. The interpretation of literary statements is the job of humanists, using the tools of historical criticism, linguistics, poetics. Certainly it is a subtle, difficult, and often vague business; but I don't suppose that anybody in his right mind ever thought that the science of man would be less complex than physics or biology. Just consider how the idiomatic use of a language, so judged by the consensus of millions of users of the language, must give us far more experiential evidence for what is the human case than could possibly be gathered by the trivial samplings of sociologists and psychologists. (I take it that this was the great re-discovery made by Wittgenstein in his old age, and since developed by the new school of linguistic philosophy.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and its present lapse is owing to the brute fact that, over several centuries, it has been defeated by experimental science in a frank and fair contest of miracles and wonders. Science has worked better against plagues, and it has proved to be immensely better at flying and distant communication. As late as the Russian Revolution, a means of trying to defeat Christianity was to take a moujik up in an airplane and prove to him that God wasn't in the sky after all. (Let me say, moreover, that the fields where Christianity still has pretty good hold of the souls of men are precisely, conversion and peace of mind; for here, Christianity has a few fumbling techniques, like revivalism and prayer, whereas Western science knows nothing and resists learning anything. But the Eastern technologists have invented brain-washing.)

Our hope was, during the Enlightenment, to dissolve all magical fears. Tyrannies and castes were undermined; religion was refuted; progressive education began to be invented; and the claims of science too became more modest (I think that this was the chief contribution of Hume). The climax of this effort against superstition was the amazing synthesis of Kant, who managed to combine Hume and Rousseau with his own background of astronomer and pietist. But the history has turned out otherwise. For political, economic, and technological reasons, magical fears have not been dissolved. The specialist caste of wonder-workers has grown more specialist (and recently less modest), and the rest of the people more out of touch and inept. And of course, given the actual disasters that scientific technology has produced, superstitious respect for the wizards has become tinged with a lust to tear them limb from limb. When C. P. Snow calls this anti-scientific bent Luddite and machine-breaking, he misses the public tone, which is rather a murderousness toward the scientists as persons—it is more like anti-Semitism. (Wiser scientists, like Huxley or Helmholtz or Einstein, have been sensitive to the danger of scientific estrangement, but their efforts of a hundred years to enlighten the people have clearly failed to touch the real causes.)

In one respect the popular superstition of science is more desperate than the medieval superstition of the Church. For in the past, as counter-evidence to what the priest said, there was the tradition of scientific experience and natural philosophy, and especially every man's experience in industry and agriculture; but now it is just this kind of counter-evidence that is pre-empted by the experts. For instance, our learned physicians are much better, but when they happen to be off on a wrong tangent, a patient cannot escape to his common prudence, veterinary wisdom, or old wives' folklore. If a man does not trust in Science, in what shall he trust? It was to address just this problem that Kant, again, insisted that, in the university, the faculty of philosophy must stand apart as a critical "loyal opposition from the left" (the phrase is Kant's), in order to purge of superstition and extravagant claims the other faculties, of theology, law, and medicine, and he would now surely have included engineering.

The overwhelming majority of our modern scientists are certainly not afraid of their own powerful experiments, whose effects they understand better. Indeed, the religious benevolence anxiously demanded of the experimenter by a Paracelsus is neglected even beyond the limits of prudence and common morals. First-rate scientists are today working, apparently indifferently, on fantastically harmful projects that ordinary mortals would shy away from. (I assume that we must take this "indifference" and lack of a position as a profound unconscious dissociation: they are warding off feelings of involvement, whether of fear, guilt, or power.)

To understand our scientists, let us contrast their official modern position with a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more traditional scientific attitude that has come down from the heroic age of the 17th century.

The official modern position is that *scientists are dedicated to science*. Let us spell this out. (1) Science is a self-contained, infinitely self-accumulating and self-improving system of consensus, corrigible only by further science. Scientists are committed to this system and get their satisfaction in its service. (2) The object of scientific inquiry is the truth of nature, but nature is valueless (neutral). Scientists do not love nature. (3) The truths of nature can, however, be usefully applied to human desires; but it is not the scientists who care about these applications, for scientists do not as such have desires; they are dedicated to the self-improving system of science. Nature cannot provide them with goals because nature is neutral. (4) Scientists are not responsible for the use made of their work. They may have sentimental biases, but these do not exert much force on them. The important thing is the chance to work, and all problems provide the chance for equally excellent service. (This does not, of course, preclude feelings of pride when important use is made of one's work.)

WHAT shall we make of this astonishing theological position, maintained with considerable dogmatism, that began to flower, I guess, in the German universities of the 19th century? It establishes a caste serving an abstracted entity, the self-developing system of scientific consensus. The form of the service is adherence to the "scientific method" and it is very strict, sometimes obsessionally so, as when, in a particular case, no matter how the results are really attained, e.g. by luck, insight, or philosophic appraisal, they must be ritually checked and put in proper form to enter into science. The method is the only sure way. With this goes a detachment from any other immediately human or divine commitments.

The dogmatism is pretty absolute. The fact that certain areas of experience have proved stubbornly *un*fruitful for the scientific method as we practice it, is not taken as problematic. Rather, sometimes such areas are slighted as absurd or non-existent. (This is when, as C. D. Broad said on psychical phenomena, "The editor of *Nature* seems to think he is the Author of nature.") Sometimes, as with morals and fine arts and letters, the areas are compartmentalized off as arbitrary or "emotional," although quite important—on this view, the emotions are denied any value as means of knowledge (a view, by the way, that is biologically absurd). And very often, as in social studies, problems are piously swamped with busy-work scientific approaches that yield little but, being in proper form, preserve the seamless robe of science. It is hard to think of a single work by a scientist that systematically and empirically explores the failures of scientific method and the blank areas recalcitrant to scientific method. Again one has to go back to Immanuel Kant! But he was not an experimentalist. Finally, with regard to the applications of science, it is confidently promised that the fruits of the scientific method will produce happiness. Evidences to the contrary are not given much weight, and anyway they will be nullified by the further advance of science. For instance, "sin" is now experienced, by laymen and scientists both, as physical and mental disease, corrigible only by further modern science. Understand, my point is not that these prejudices and claims of modern science are necessarily false, but that we are obviously dealing with a rigid orthodoxy and plenty of superstition.

Contrast this with the more traditional view—it could be called natural philosophy or naturalism—that goes back to the Renaissance and is still the abiding strength of many scientists, and that leavens all science. The difference is in the great importance that the moderns assign to the system of science as a self-contained entity to serve, whereas the naturalists

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conceive of themselves as investigators of a kind of personified Nature, from whom they get their primary satisfactions. Naturalists would not say "nature is neutral," though of course "she" is beyond men's petty concerns. They love nature, or are curious, or surprised, or awestruck at finding Cosmos in Chaos. Sometimes they are afraid, like Job confronted with Warhorse and Leviathan, for "nature is red in tooth and claw." Correspondingly, nature provides goals, and often principles of ethics. By contrast, the excitement of a modern scientist in his confrontation of nature is that of solving a hard puzzle and getting on with the work.

Scientific "objectivity," then, can mean two different things: For the naturalist it is non-attachment and holding back, in order not to disturb the object of his absorbed attention—though he may have experimentally intervened to put the object in the proper condition for his attentiveness; and the fruition of his action is perhaps an insight or theory that unites him, as if orgastically, with the object. (The type is Darwin, gazing long hours at the bee and the flower.) But to the modern scientist, objectivity is the detachment, necessary for accuracy, of the good reporter or scout, whose satisfaction comes from dutifully bringing home the true account to headquarters, to add to the system of science. (But of course it is the experiment that is reported and not the "object," for the object is what is indifferently whirled and banged. I take it that this is the philosophical meaning of the Principle of Indeterminacy, that it is not the "object" that is reported, but the interaction of the apparatus and the object. But why not of the *experimenter,* the apparatus, and the object? This is the crux of the matter.)*

The heroes of science, ancient and modern, have of course been lively men, men of the world, or savage men, or childlike men—one thinks of Newton playing, as he tells us, with his colored pebbles on the shore of the endless sea. Much of their spirit, and the love of nature, exists among our scientists and engineers. I do not know what the relative proportion is—it is an empirical question and perhaps testable—but my hunch is that the norm of our contemporary dedicated scientist, especially in the bureaucratized universities, foundations, and business and state offices, is more like the old scholarly monk or priest: obsessional, puzzle-solving, ritualistic, and with a detached kind of objectivity. I do not mean that the dedicated scientist is an Organization Man, for he has a real subject matter; he is not just filling a role. But the bother with such types, socially, is that they rarely have enough inner vitality to withstand being exploited by fanatics or dictators or brigands. Whether

* A fairly close analogy to the theology of modern science is the old Augustinian theodicy, the notion that the history of the world is a process unfolding the City of God, and that it is the part of a Christian to inhibit or otherwise detach himself from natural experience, and to imitate the abstract patterns. In the analogy, the self-improving system of scientific consensus is like the unfolding of God's purpose. The psychology of both scientist and priest is objective and obsessional, frowning on spontaneous responses and rejecting other methods than the proper ritual service as essentially irrelevant if not wicked. Both nobly propose Truth and Beauty as absolute aims and models, and promise happiness for mankind; but these goods are attainable only through strict observance. Most important for our purposes, however, is what these groups give the world: both give forth matter, sacramentally improved. The Church, having a religious background, exerts mainly psychological influence; whereas science, having a basis in industrial arts, has produced our technology.

Perhaps there is not only an analogy but a historical continuity. We can trace the Neo-Platonizing (and sometimes Gnostic) theodicy deep into the 17th century, where it influenced major thinkers like Leibniz. Let me make a speculation. In the heroic age of science, the scientists were in rebellion against the ritual order and turned, as natural philosophers, to personal contact with personified Nature. But when science combined with the "Protestant ethic" and became bureaucratized, and then became the dominant system of ideas, the theodicy and its service again came to the fore. Certainly the transformation from "idealism" to "materialism" in which the revolutionists of the 18th and 19th centuries had such high hopes, has not mattered much for true believers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we think of Germany, or Russia, or our own country, our modern scientists do not loom as especial exemplars of manly honor.

But whatever the scientists mean to be and are, many of the technological products of modern science do have the following characteristics: they have been worked up in a spirit detached from ordinary uses; they embody knowledge increasingly far from ordinary experience; and therefore they are *imposed* on society and compel people to move and work in ways strange to them. The machines that people use are, effectually, canned rituals. Perhaps it is necessary for most scientists to continue as priests of the system of science; but if so, their detachment, and their puzzle-solving, will continue to saddle society with life-complicating, indirect, and essentially irrelevant and boring products. Naturally human beings are adaptable and malleable, and they manage fairly well to go through the song and dance of our industrial and other technological systems. But this is not a desirable state of affairs. People can be socialized to scientific technology, but they are not at present adequate to it—nor is much of it good for anything. Therefore they are conformist and superstitious.

Surveying the high schools, Dr. Conant of Harvard concluded that only 15 per cent of the youth were "academically talented" enough to take "hard" subjects, sciences and mathematics. Then something is wrong. And of the 15 per cent, we may be sure, the majority are merely dutiful passers of tests, good at manipulating symbols, but without feeling for the causes of things. They are not scientists. If this is what is meant by a scientific society, the world of the "new scientific revolution," as C. P. Snow calls it, I cannot see the advantage of it, either for mankind *or* for science.

* * *

My argument has been that we live in a climate of superstition, where a dogmatic and obsessional caste of scientists imposes rituals on an ignorant populace living in a low-grade anxiety of magic. In this climate it is possible to proliferate without restraint a mass technology selected not on moral or useful criteria, but for the advantage of the powers that be. And these powers further exploit the scientists to the detriment of science.

What then do I want? What am I after? For the immediate future, four simple things. I want our scientists to dissociate themselves from the military that is abusing them and to appeal to their Russian colleagues to do the same, so we can have peace. They can and do communicate; and my guess is that an agreement among a couple of hundred of them *could* exert an effective pressure. I want the scientists to regard the development of the regions of poverty in the light of what is humanly advantageous for those peoples, with a less uncritical acceptance of our own technology as the ideal; and in our own country, to be more circumspect about whom they are working for, and on what. Finally, in the allocation of time and funds for education, I want the scientists to throw their influence on the side of a course and method of education that will break down the barrier between science and the humanities and begin to dissipate the climate of superstition, instead of the present proposed program of apprentice-training, which will make it worse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMITAI ETZIONI

NEO-LIBERALISM—THE TURN OF THE 60's

ONE OF THE most striking aspects of the 1960 election campaign is that it was waged between two comparatively liberal platforms and candidates. It is true that Kennedy carried the standard of a party whose majority is actually liberal, whereas Nixon represented a party which had subscribed to a relatively liberal platform (including a rather strong civil rights position) with some reluctance, and Nixon himself was, at the very best, but a recent convert to liberalism. Yet these differences are of secondary importance: the main political fact is that the majority of voters—and in a sense the entire political climate—was moving toward a liberal orientation. Both parties, in the conventions as in the campaign, were pushed into emphasizing their progressive elements, and that John F. Kennedy was elected only dramatizes the increasing scope and potency of the liberal forces in the United States. For the election of Kennedy serves to mark nothing less than the end of a neo-conservative decade and the beginning of a neo-liberal one—not only in the United States but throughout the Western world. From Canada to New Zealand, from Sweden to Israel, the conservative right is in retreat, and the liberal or radical left is steadily gaining in power. It would seem that the forces responsible for the neo-conservatism of the 50's are in process of exhaustion and that a new set of forces is developing which favor the electoral chances of the parties on the left. To understand why this has come about, it may be useful to review the main political trends in the Western world since 1945.

Wars often undermine existing social structures, and thereby tend to create a situation favorable to radical and liberal parties. Thus, many concessions to underprivileged groups are made during or shortly after wars. For example, in the United States women received the right to vote in 1920, and the army was integrated in World War II; and in Europe, the world's first Communist regime was established in World War I, while after the war Germany became a republic with a Social Democrat majority; and a few years later England elected its first labor government.

Similarly, immediately after World War II, the Social Democrats came to power in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark; in France and Italy, both Socialists and Communists participated in the first postwar governments; in Austria, there was a Socialist premier. In France, the vice premier and the minister of armaments were both Communists, as was the minister of

AMITAI ETZIONI is an assistant professor in the department of sociology at Columbia. Born in 1929 in Cologne, he went to Israel in 1936 and has since become an Israeli citizen. Mr. Etzioni studied at the Hebrew University and the University of California at Berkeley; he has written a large number of articles for a variety of journals in both Israel and the United States, and is the author of *The Diary of a Commando Soldier* (1952, Israel). This is his first contribution to COMMENTARY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

justice in Italy. Finland had a coalition government based chiefly on Social Democratic and Communist support. Australia and New Zealand had Labor governments, and even in Britain—where practically everybody expected the Conservatives to gain from Churchill's leadership and his wartime prestige—the Labor party was elected to office only a few months after VJ day. In the United States, to the surprise of many, the Democrats, with the victory of Truman in 1948, held on to the presidency; and in Canada, the Liberals won again.*

During the late 40's and early 50's, however, in one country after another the political tide began to flow to the right. In some cases, leftist governments steadily lost ground with each successive election; and in others, conservative parties with strong right-wing elements began coming to power.

First to be struck by the shift toward conservatism were the Social Democrats in Denmark who suffered reverses in the late 1945 election and were finally forced into opposition between 1950 and 1953. The Social Democrats in Finland were hit hard in 1948, and Labor, the following year, was ousted in Australia and New Zealand, continuing on the decline well into the late 50's. In Germany in 1949 and in Britain in 1951, the Conservatives took over, and increased their pluralities in every subsequent election. The United States followed suit in 1950 with a Congress less heavily Democratic than it had normally been and then in 1952 with its first Republican President in twenty years. While the Social Democrats in Sweden, Norway, and Israel during this period managed to retain power, the right-wing groups in all these countries gained support in each election, during the decade from the late 40's to the late 50's. Canada was the last country in which this general shift to the right showed itself; the Conservatives made gains in 1957, then in 1958 were swept into office for the first time in twenty-two years.

THE FORCES which halted and then reversed the postwar upsurge of liberalism and radicalism are fairly well known. Among them, economic factors were strong. It was widely believed in 1948 that a crisis, if not a full depression, would result from conversion to peacetime production, but when the economy of the West—helped along by a universal growth in population, the Marshall Plan, and finally the Korean war—instead entered a period of prosperity, people everywhere were highly gratified. As Seymour Martin Lipset and Juan Linz demonstrate in *The Social Bases of Diversity in Western Democracy,* such gratification usually works in favor of conservative parties. Thus, for the first time since the 30's, the belief in the inevitability of a cyclical depression was shattered, and a new generation with no experience of the crash of 1929 came of age to create the extraordinary circumstance of young people who were voting more conservatively than their elders. Between 80 and 90 per cent of the "coming of age" group voted for the Democrats in 1932 and 1936 (as compared with the Democrats' total vote of 59 and 62 per cent, respectively); in 1948, 1952, and 1956, young people went Republican in proportions ranging from 3 to 10 per cent higher than did their parents.†

In those countries where the economy had been severely damaged by the war, the cooperation of the labor unions with

* The political trends discussed through this article also held for the Netherlands and for Belgium; but the large number of parties in these countries with the frequent changes in coalition, made for overcomplicated references.

† According to a 1960 Gallup poll, Nixon was more popular with older than with younger people: he was supported by 42 per cent of the 30–49 group, and 55 per cent of the fifty-plus group. Such figures suggest that the young generation of the 60's, like that of the 30's and unlike that of the 50's, probably stands to the left of its elders. Of course this article was largely written before the current election.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the government in the job of reconstruction was an extremely important factor in the political shift to the right. In the Netherlands, for example, the unions agreed to a long wage freeze despite increasing prices; and in Germany, unions permitted their members to rebuild factories without wages, sometimes for as long as an entire year. The decision of union leaders to follow a line of "national responsibility" led to considerable alienation of the rank and file, who felt that their interests were not being properly guarded and who stayed away from the polls in rather large numbers. The conservative parties consequently gained by default.

Apart from all this, there were certain intellectual developments which contributed to the rightward swing of the 50's. Under the impact of the Korean war, of Khrushchev's revelations about the Stalinist regime, and of the Hungarian revolution, an endless number of intellectuals abandoned the Communist and left-Socialist parties all over the Western world. For the first time since the 20's, radicalism ceased to be fashionable among intellectuals; and the stage was thus set for a reconciliation between society, which—to meet the ideological challenge of Communism—needed its intellectuals more than ever, and the intellectuals themselves. (To some extent, intellectuals in the United States were even "courted"—through fellowships, trips abroad, grants, etc.—which tended to act as a further damper on radical thought.) This development found expression, to take only one example, in the foundation of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, under whose sponsorship a series of magazines —*Encounter* in England, *Preuves* in France, *Der Monat* in Germany, *Tempo Presente* in Italy, and others—were launched partly in an effort to consolidate intellectual anti-Communist opinion throughout the world. For obvious reasons, such opinion often took the form of simple pro-Americanism and therefore tended in a conservative direction even when it was not ideologically conservative.

With the shift of intellectuals to the right, or with their withdrawal from politics altogether, the Socialist and even the liberal parties lost some of their leadership. Large sectors of the voting public were unable to draw the more subtle lines between the various sub-groups of the left, and many of the arguments against Communism were therefore applied indiscriminately to the left in general.

Another factor undermining the left was the "liberalization" of traditionally conservative parties: in England, the Tories preserved most of the social security and nationalization measures introduced by Labor; in Canada, the Conservatives changed their program and renamed themselves the Progressive Conservatives; in Germany, Adenauer introduced co-determination in industry, a social reform which was considered radical before the war; and in the United States, Eisenhower rather than Taft was chosen to represent the Republicans.

IT WAS ONLY in the late 50's that the new liberal wave which now seems to be gathering momentum first began to reveal itself. Perhaps the earliest sign was the Labor party's return to office in New Zealand in 1957. In the United States, the first indication that an important political shift was in the making was the 1958 election in which the Democrats increased their control of the House and the Senate and also elected a large number of governors, senators, and congressmen in such traditionally Republican states as Maine, Vermont, and Connecticut. The liberal trend continued to manifest itself in the "New Nixon," then in the acceptance this year by the Republican party of the Rockefeller platform, and finally, of course, in the victory of Kennedy.

Events in many other countries confirm the impression that this shift is part of a general trend. In Israel, 1959 marked the first election in ten years in which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mapai (the Social Democrats) gained strength; the liberal Progressives also gained slightly; and—again, for the first time in a decade—the right-wing lost heavily. In Austria, from 1949 to 1959, the Socialists had been the weaker member of a two-party coalition government, but in 1959 they improved their position considerably and came within one seat of their rival, Raab's People's party. In Sweden in 1960 the Social Democrats made their first important gain since 1948: the Communists, Liberals, and even the center also gained, while the Conservatives lost. In Germany (though it offers a slightly more complicated example) the Social Democrats, who are running a New Look candidate, the Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt, are expected to move up in the coming elections, and have already increased their power in five state elections during the last three years. In Canada, the trend of recent local elections is so markedly Liberal that the Conservative premier is reported to be planning a general election long before the end of his term (1963). Even in Britain, where (for reasons to be discussed below) Labor is not deriving the benefits of the new movement to the left, there has been a definite Liberal revival. Last month the Social Democrats won in Denmark, and the forthcoming elections in Finland and Australia will allow us to test the scope and momentum of the trend.

Why is this shift to the left taking place? First of all, the forces which produced the neo-conservative 50's have spent most of their momentum. In the economic sphere, while European prosperity has declined only slightly, the United States has undergone a rapid series of small recessions which have helped to undermine the postwar feeling of prosperity. People who came out of the war expecting a depression were surprised and happy when they got prosperity instead. But by now—precisely because of fifteen years of prosperity—the level of economic expectation is much higher. Practically everyone, even in often-burned Detroit, has come to regard a vigorous economy as the norm and deeply resents every decline in employment and living standards—a feeling which appears to generate support for the left, as its opposite generates support for the right.

Moreover, in Western Europe, with the end of economic reconstruction, unions in Germany, the Netherlands, and Austria are resuming their traditional role of pressing for a larger share of industrial income for their members. Consequently, they are in the process of regaining some of their lost popularity, and are once again in a position to influence the recently apathetic worker vote.

In the intellectual sphere, the ideological warfare against Communism has subsided. In addition, because of a certain guilt that has developed among intellectuals, they have begun to reassume a critical role. This is reflected in the formation of several "new left" groups—radical but not Communist—who are represented in France by *Arguments,* in England by the *New Left Review,* and in the United States by *Liberation* and by several journals recently launched in the universities.

In the United States, too, the declining pressure for conformity has led many ex-radicals and liberals to become vocal once more and politically active; one example is the support given by a large number of professors at the University of California to the students who demonstrated some months ago in San Francisco against the Committee on Un-American Activities.

THE SECOND development that is working to make the 60's a decade of neo-liberalism is the appearance—or the coming to consciousness—of a new set of social problems. In general, the 50's were a period of reconstruction and consolidation in which remarkably few new areas of state control and welfare were opened up. Yet in this as in other such periods, several issues, confronted but not ade-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quately handled, continued to build up social pressure—and that pressure has now culminated in a demand for parties of change rather than of consolidation.

It is important to note first that economic problems, which for many years maintained a near monopoly of attention in the internal politics of Western countries, are rapidly losing their position of priority. Short of totally collectivizing their economies, Western societies—through a progressive taxation and a differential distribution of social services in favor of the lower classes and the underprivileged groups—have attained a marked leveling of the class structure.

This is not to suggest that all problems of economic redistribution have been solved. There are those who go to sleep hungry in south Italy and in Sicily, as well as in Ireland and West Virginia. Furthermore, the problem of unemployment is likely to be aggravated by increased automation, unless the state exercises greater control; and collective support for the growing group of the aged also remains to be undertaken. Yet the solutions to these problems—in the development of which the U.S. lags far behind other Western societies—will be much less revolutionary than were the creation of social security and the progressive income tax, for the groups that will be affected are relatively smaller and the pattern for dealing with such matters has been set and is widely accepted.

The prime economic issue, in any case, is no longer the redistribution of national income among the various social classes; the question now is the proportion in which national income will be parceled out between public and private expenditures. This, then, is the first crucial issue of the 60's: to what extent should resources be taken away from all classes, not to help the lowest-income groups, but to deal with the collective needs of the entire nation?

It seems clear that left-wing parties are more likely to come to grips with this issue than those of the right, since the former have traditionally recognized and articulated the need for public control of the economy and have fewer ideological inhibitions against it. Moreover, the social groups supporting them very often include those that cannot afford doctors, universities, and the like, and thus tend to pressure their parties into providing such services as a public right.*

Many countries are only now reaching a stage in which the economic power exercised by the state can begin to change its primary objective from stimulating production and equalizing the distribution of income to making needed resources and services available to the entire public. Left-wing parties in affluent societies like Sweden have already begun to attack this issue and to gain from it politically. The Democrats of the United States also obviously gained votes because of their stress on federal aid to education, research, and public health.

THE SECOND major issue of the 60's will be international relations—a sphere in which virtually no changes took place throughout the consolidating 50's (in the sense that the United States continued in the lead until 1958). In prewar years (and especially in the United States) opinion polls indicate that interest in international relations was highly sporadic; in most (non-war) election campaigns internal issues received the bulk of attention. But since the beginning of the cold war, and—more particularly—since the widening of the missile gap, the concern of the ordinary voter with international affairs has risen enormously. This concern—so far as we can tell from the available evidence—is for disarmament and the termination of the cold war; it has already expressed itself in the spread

* These remarks do not gainsay the argument that even liberal and left-wing parties will become fearful of losing rank-and-file support if they advocate measures which do not benefit their members directly, e.g., increased support for basic research.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of neutralism, the revival and increased appeal of the various pacifist groups, the campaign for unilateral disarmament, and other less extreme or direct manifestations. In England, for example, Labor, which could not decide upon a foreign policy before the 1959 election, lost much support in that election; but the Liberals, whose platform stressed a decreased commitment to United States foreign policy and some degree of neutralism, made impressive gains. In the United States, similarly, Rockefeller found less support for his militant position on armament and civil defense than for anything else he advocated last spring; and Stuart Symington, closer ideologically than any other of the 1959 presidential aspirants to the advocates of a tough line in the cold war, made very little headway. And, of course, the man who lost was Nixon, who had "stood up" to Khrushchev, who refused to express regret over the U-2 incident, and who held to an intransigently hard policy on Quemoy and Matsu. The victory went to Kennedy, who (except for his unfortunate statements concerning Cuba) spoke for the "cooler" approach in foreign affairs.

It would seem, then, that those parties who emphasize the goals of coexistence and a peaceful settlement of the cold war will score the greatest gains in all Western countries during the coming years. But is there any reason to suppose that a policy of coexistence is more natural to the left than to the right? I think there is. First of all, right-wing parties have long been associated with the pursuit of national glory, while the parties of the left have everywhere been internationalist in tone (even if they have found it expedient to underplay this quality in moments of crisis). For example, the Socialist parties of all six members of the European Economic Community have strongly supported the creation of federal institutions while the Conservative parties have opposed them as violations of sovereignty. Moreover, the right tends to see in Russia not only an international troublemaker but an evil demon, a society whose every institution is dangerous or vicious. The left, on the other hand, has mixed feelings about Russia; like the right, it deplores the suppression of freedom under totalitarianism, but at the same time it sees virtues in certain features of the Russian system, and is thus inclined to be less absolutistic in its condemnation of the Communist world. (There is a final factor which suggests greater left-wing identification with the peace issue. It is obvious that some industries have a vested interest in international tensions, in high levels of military preparedness, and even in limited wars. Such industries tend to join with and influence the right; the left on the whole seems much less hospitable to them. The importance of this point is very difficult to assess.) Thus on the whole, the left is more likely than the right to respond to the widespread desire for an international settlement and to gain from it politically.

THE last of the problems of the 60's concerns the extremely complex issue of upward social mobility. Sociologists have long noted that when a person moves up the economic scale, improving his income (and perhaps his occupation), he will attempt to improve his social status as well—by joining more exclusive and more prestigeful groups, say, or by moving to "better" neighborhoods, or by voting for parties which represent the upper rather than the lower class. At first, gains in upward mobility, championed mainly by the liberal parties, work directly to their disadvantage: their very success in opening up channels of economic opportunity results in the loss of many members and especially in the loss of the children of members. Once an individual rises into the middle class, his children tend to vote for right-wing parties—Conservative in England, Republican in the U.S.—as a confirmation of their new position (and perhaps in reaction against their parents). But as soon as these newer members of the middle class realize that their economic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gains have not been matched by a commensurate gain in social status, they seem to rebel against the parties that speak for the higher echelons of power and prestige. It is this rebellion which seems to be occurring now in many different countries, with the result that formerly conservative voters will throw their support to those parties which can express their resentment at being handicapped socially and which promise to open new social channels to them and their children.

A CENTRAL problem for the politician of the 60's is to find a program to satisfy these aspirations. While it is hardly possible to present such a program here, several examples of what might be done may help to illuminate the issue itself. One important route to positions of influence and status lies through certain educational institutions like the public schools and Oxford and Cambridge in Britain, and the prep schools and Ivy League universities in the United States. Thus the creation and enforcement of what could be called "fair educational practices," requiring that recruitment to all such schools depend on academic merit alone, would undoubtedly be popular with the voter who feels himself to be "socially underprivileged." Similarly, "fair employment" legislation could be extended to reduce not only racial and ethnic discrimination but also the degree of class control over certain professions (surgery, for instance, is still a highly exclusive profession in America). Finally, a "fair political recruitment" program, assuring that public service and the political arena were equally open to all groups, would relieve social tensions in countries like England where the upper class tends to dominate in those areas.

It is quite clearly the left-wing parties who are most apt to work toward narrowing the breach between ability and opportunity and between recently acquired economic power and social status. However, their long tradition of anti-establishmentism and support of social change and mobility does not guarantee that this necessarily be so. A case in point is the Labor party in Britain, which has so far refused to recognize and make use of what the conservative *Times* already understands quite well: the increasing prominence of social strains as a political issue. "Half the population in England is constantly engaged in trying to talk more grandly than its parents did," the *Times* writes, and goes on to explain that the socially underprivileged—symbolized by their non-university accent—have less to fear from obstacles to their "professional" (economic) ascent than from the "cruel personal embarrassment" (social frustration) they will be made to endure along the way. In answer to this problem—as to the other main problems of the 60's—neither the orthodox nor the revisionist wing of the Labor party has much to say. Nationalization is no longer central. The issue is not control of production, but of consumption; not the redistribution of income between social classes but between kinds of expenditure; and not, finally, economic but social advancement.

In the United States, the Democrats won in part because they were led by a man who could be identified with the more covert desires for increased social mobility and opportunity felt by labor and the new middle classes: in the ambitions and handicaps of a Catholic candidate these groups saw something of their own situation. The Democrats won, too, because on the whole they responded more sharply to all three of the major problems of the 60's. It is hardly a prediction, therefore, to assert that during the next decade throughout the Western world those parties which best satisfy the new demands for social egalitarianism, greater international understanding, and greater public expenditure for education and welfare, will occupy the positions of power. They already do.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MIDGE DECTER

THE LEGACY OF HENRIETTA SZOLD

THE year 1960 has been set aside by the Zionist movement, Hadassah particularly, for celebrating the centennial of the birth of Miss Henrietta Szold. In addition to being the founder, first president, and ideal personification, as it were, of Hadassah—the American women's General Zionist organization—Henrietta Szold had the kind of extraordinary life and career that must surely give her a place among the modern Zionist saints. She was largely responsible for both conceiving and realizing the major public health and welfare programs in Jewish Palestine; she was the director of Youth Aliyah, an agency which after 1935 performed the feat of rescuing, settling in Palestine, and educating 30,000 children from Nazi Europe and elsewhere; and she must also be credited, although indirectly, with the passage of countless millions of dollars from America and other Western countries to the Palestinian community. Not the least extraordinary fact about this career is that it took its most practical turn when she was sixty years old.

Perhaps no people is so intransigently equalitarian in its legend-making as the Jews: with their heroes they must share a secret—a wink, a double meaning, a small vice—from the rest of the uncomprehending world. Chaim Bialik, Chaim Weizmann, Shemarya Levin, David Ben Gurion—to mention a few of the Zionist saints—carry the aura of a greatness made all the more real by a certain reducing intimacy. There is, however, no familiar legend of Henrietta Szold. Somehow the secret is not possible with her, who always appears—even in the descriptions of those who knew her best—wrapped in her record of achievement, splendid, abstract, a little forbidding. The tiny, exquisitely gnome-like, white-haired lady who worked for eighteen hours a day until she was in her eighties is called "our founder," "our leader," "our guiding spirit" in tones of hushed reverence, almost as if to talk with familiarity about Henrietta Szold might be to take some unwarranted liberty.

Henrietta Szold was born in Baltimore on December 21, 1860, and was therefore an infant during the American Civil War. Her father, a Hungarian-born, Vienna-educated Conservative rabbi, was a man of learning and advanced social and religious ideas, and she his eldest and favorite child. The culture of her home was that peculiar and short-lived species of German Jewish Romantic enlightenment overlaid with a post-bellum American passion for social betterment. In her father's study, where she very early became both confidante and amanuensis, "Miss Henrietta" learned Jewish history and classical languages—and doubtless in an earnest young way shared her father's dream of a universally enlightened and cultivated

MIDGE DECTER, who studied at the University of Minnesota and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, has been contributing articles and reviews to COMMENTARY since 1951. Her work has also appeared in *Partisan Review* and *Midstream*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jewry. (This dream had a material effect on her life; from 1893 until 1916 she was to serve as editor of the Jewish Publication Society, an enterprise originally founded for the purpose of making great Jewish books available to American Jews in English translation.) When she completed high school, Miss Henrietta joined the staff of an elegant girls' academy, where for several years she taught German, botany—all her life she remained an ardent amateur botanist—and mathematics.

People have tended to draw a parallel between Henrietta Szold's coming to Zionism and that of Theodor Herzl: she and Herzl were contemporaries, both "Western," both brought up on German culture. But the parallel is faulty. Herzl's Zionism was a shocked response to his discovery, through the Dreyfus Affair, that Emancipation was a cheat as far as the Jews were concerned. Hers was the inevitable result of what can only be called her Jewish feelings. She was a pious Jew, but historically and culturally, rather than theologically, pious—after the tradition of her father. And in fact, the Conservative movement, with its twin notions of the historical development, and the fulfillment within history, of Judaism, was from the very beginning a most logically fertile ground for the breeding of Zionism.

Her difference from Herzl seems worth dwelling on because it points to something significant both about Henrietta Szold's life and work and about the Zionist movement in general. Herzl, with his dashing Viennese manners and his aspirations to aristocracy, grand gestures, and historic moments, was sufficiently detached from the real concerns of the masses of his fellow Jews to become the kind of romantic figure who might serve as a symbol of their new movement. Furthermore, as he moved through the courts and salons of Europe, pleading for the rightful estate of the Jews and dreaming of their eventual glory, Herzl gave Zionists the sense that what they wanted for themselves could be allied with the respectable impulses of European nationalism—and so without really understanding these Jews, he was able to activate them. Henrietta Szold belonged in the far more complicated if more commonplace tradition that fed into the mainstream of modern Zionism. What she and the early "Lovers of Zion" wanted was not so much to save the Jews from the degradation of statelessness as such: she wanted a way of giving the individual Jew a new sense of his own dignity and the Jewish people as a whole a sense of security that were both lacking in the Diaspora. Henrietta Szold's education, like Herzl's, was grounded in Western culture (many years later she was to tell a group of children just arrived in Palestine from Nazi Germany, "Do not forget your Goethe and your Schiller. They are Germany, too"); but in her upbringing there was also an element of East European Haskalah, which pronounced: the mission of the Jews is to become again as whole and as live and as valuable as we once were. For Herzl the object was always the Jewish people. For Henrietta Szold and those at the spiritual center of the Zionist movement the object was Jews. And with them she shared that loving antipathy for what had become of Jewish life and institutions as a result of centuries in the Diaspora that made real-world Zionism, and ultimately the State of Israel, possible.

Actually, there was an event—of the kind biographers find so useful in determining the sources of their subjects' ideas—that undoubtedly pushed her into accepting the need for Jewish statehood. In 1881 refugees from the Russian pogroms began pouring into Baltimore and gravitating, the learned and eager among them, to the hospitable home of Rabbi Benjamin Szold. By 1889, Miss Henrietta was devoting every minute to be spared from an already formidable routine of teaching, botanizing, and activity in such groups as the Women's Literary Club, to "my Russians." With her help,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they established night classes in English and American history for the new immigrants. She undertook to procure rooms and supplies for this "school"—the model for what later became the predominant pattern in immigrant Americanization—to plan the curriculum, supervise, provide teachers, and teach herself. She was clearly hit hard by "her" Russians, but not—as Herzl would have been—so much by their collective plight as by her recognition of kinship with this new and strangely impressive breed of Jews. Coming into contact with them helped her formulate the political Zionism which had been latent in her commitment to Jewish tradition. Under the proper conditions of freedom and cultural autonomy, what might not these marvelous people accomplish—these people whose aspirations she found were vibrating in the depths of her own nervous system?

By 1893 she was helping to organize a Zionist society in Baltimore. Then in New York, where she and her mother settled in 1902 after the death of Rabbi Szold, she joined a women's Zionist study circle which called itself Hadassah, after the Jewish queen of Persia. It is not entirely clear by what impulse these early Zionist groups in America were organized or for what specific purpose. There were several of them scattered across the country, all founded around the same time—that is, more or less at the turn of the century. All were, it may be imagined, study groups, much like the New York Hadassah: the members prepared papers on aspects of Jewish history or ritual, and they held discussions of the new Zionist literature.

On her first trip to Palestine, in 1909, Henrietta Szold (or, as the story goes, her mother) found something useful for herself and her fellow Hadassah members to do. Prophetically enough, they were to translate their Zionism into action by doing something about health conditions in Palestine. Henrietta Szold returned to America with the proposal that the Hadassah group send a couple of public health nurses to Palestine to help combat such diseases as the trachoma she and her mother had found raging among the schoolchildren there. Even this tiny venture would have been too expensive for the single group to undertake, but the eminent philanthropist Nathan D. Straus offered to pay the nurses' first year's salary and also to equip a settlement house—on the model of the Henry Street Settlement—for their base of operation. Then in 1912, eight women's Zionist groups from several different cities met in Buffalo and constituted themselves a national organization, which was to take over responsibility for the public nursing venture. After some discussion, the organization adopted the name of the original New York group—Hadassah.

In any single life it is easy to detect recurring patterns; in Henrietta Szold's they were sharply marked out. The founding of Hadassah and its first project appeared in the same rhythm of development that she imposed on things and events over and over in her life: first came the work, conceived in the most direct and unpretentious way, then the organization, and then the burst of imagination and ambition that committed everyone, including Henrietta Szold, far beyond his original intentions. Much is made of Henrietta Szold's modesty and public shyness—so much that one must credit the reports. But modesty by itself cannot explain her peculiar mode of operation; no truly shy woman could have pushed her will so far. She had become the editor of the Jewish Publication Society after first doing some difficult and painstaking work as a volunteer; then she assumed full editorial responsibility—for the Society and for the American Jewish Year Book as well—that involved her in the most minute questions of scholarship, translation, and bibliography. In Palestine later, she was to begin each job as a kind of office manager, sweeping her small and punctiliously collected details into ever more grandiose

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heaps: a nurse's school, a hospital, a medical school, a youth welfare program, finally a national social service network. She was a woman who backed into everything she did. Once in, however, it never occurred to her that she was out over her head; nor was she ever.

Two things about her, it seems to me—one ideological, one personal—accounted for this pattern. First, she was a pragmatic liberal who abhorred the visionary—and abhorred it all the more for being so beset, so tempted by visions herself. Anything there was to be done, no matter how great or difficult, she believed, must be done step by simple step. This belief was to plague her—and yet serve her magnificently well—in the Palestine of the 20's and 30's, where almost everything that had to be done was either bizarre or seemingly impossible. And secondly, she was someone who hated making final commitments, hated both their demands on the soul and their effects on the personality. She lived and worked most productively while dreaming of doing, of being, something else somewhere else.

Henrietta Szold's life in New York continued to be, as it had in Baltimore, a crowded one. She attended the Jewish Theological Seminary—the first and for a long time the only woman there. She was never without a heavy burden of galley proofs to read or indexes to complete. There were several articles to write for the Jewish Encyclopedia, then in preparation. She was involved in a voluminous correspondence with friends and with her four sisters, who were married and scattered. What was, from the standpoint of her future, to be her most significant activity, namely her association with a small group of friends in the Hadassah study circle, seemed then only a minor aspect of her general busyness.

Henrietta Szold was not, however, that phenomenon we recognize as a "career woman." At the very height of her activities in the world of men—who conceded to her enormous talent and power—she far more closely resembled one of those old-fashioned spinsters doing good works who have been associated in the American imagination with Abolitionism and Women's Suffrage.

She nowhere showed the marks of a great ambition, either to fame or power. Yet, though she had lived what might have been regarded as the best part of her life respected and valued and surrounded by loving friends—fulfilling, in fact, the highest demands of her time and culture—at the age of sixty (in 1920) Henrietta Szold took herself off to a distant and never quite acceptable country and remained there to become famous and powerful—and to die. The Palestine to which she went, moreover, was a wilderness, whose physical conditions were almost intolerable to people much younger and much less kindly treated by life than she, and in whose language she was not fluent.

The twenty-four years she spent in Palestine converted Henrietta Szold from an admirable woman of her day into a great woman. Yet for all those years she refused to regard herself as anything but an American on a particular mission about to return home. Anyone inclined to be mystical would have to feel that her whole life of backing into things had been a preparation for its final phase: it was greatness she was backing into.

The Palestine Henrietta Szold and her mother had seen in 1909 was a primitive place, undeveloped and disease-ridden. The Jews she found there were mostly Orientals, with a sprinkling of very early East European Zionist settlers, and of course the small Orthodox community of Jerusalem. Insofar as it could be regarded as subsisting, this early Yishuv subsisted largely on foreign philanthropy. The two Hadassah nurses who went to Palestine in 1913 must have made little enough impact on the country, medicating the fly-infested eyes of children, trying to improve the standards of pre-natal and infant care.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But during World War I, the Turks deported the nurses and most of the few doctors who had been in the country. When Henrietta Szold returned to Palestine in 1920, this time to help administer the American Zionist Medical Unit, the country was in a state of acute postwar emergency, medical, social, and economic. In 1916 Hadassah, at the behest of the American Provisional Committee for Zionist Affairs, whose chairman was Louis D. Brandeis, had undertaken to organize a relief medical group. Hadassah then had about 4,000 members. In 1916, too, a group of Henrietta Szold's friends settled a small income on her for life. This income not only freed her of the necessity to earn her living, thereby releasing all her time to the Zionist movement; it also officially placed her in the aristocratic relation to her work that was truly consonant with her character. The American Zionist Medical Unit sailed in the summer, 1918, with a first year's budget, including transportation, of $250,000. Hadassah and the Joint Distribution Committee were to share the costs.

The dependence of this first major project on so much non-Zionist money may have been responsible for one extraordinary organizational principle of Hadassah, laid down immediately by Henrietta Szold and adhered to with astonishing rigor through the years: exactly 100 per cent of the funds raised by Hadassah for projects in Palestine must go to Palestine; the money required for organization, propaganda, and fund-raising in America must come from membership dues. Forty-four years and hundreds of millions of dollars later, that percentage has been reduced to 96.

When Henrietta Szold sailed for Palestine in February 1920, it was ostensibly to represent the American Zionist Organization on the Executive Committee of the Medical Unit. She of course had no idea that the move was to be more or less permanent. She seemed not to have a very clear notion of her responsibilities (soon she was sharing responsibility with the Unit's director for administering the entire program). One thing was certain; she did not regard herself as involved in an emergency relief measure. For her the purpose of the Medical Unit (whose staff had grown in two years from forty-four to four hundred and whose budget "ought to" have been $1,000,000) was to create a standard of medical practice, public health, and medical education for the new Yishuv. What the unit succeeded in doing in the establishment of hospitals, clinics, sanitation, and the elimination of such diseases as malaria and trachoma, would provide the basis for all future handling of these problems. The outgrowth of her ideas about the Unit was the Hadassah Medical Organization and the Hadassah Hospital, a major medical center in the Middle East and co-sponsor of the Hebrew University medical school. It is interesting to note in this connection that both Henrietta Szold and Dr. Isaac Rubinow, the Unit's director, fought unsuccessfully to socialize medicine. Both their staff and the labor union movement opposed it (though subsequently the Histadrut created its own system of socialized medicine for its membership). A nurses' training school was opened and graduated its first class in November 1921. Just about this time Henrietta Szold also organized a school hygiene campaign and school lunch program.

The rest of Henrietta Szold's career is by now a matter of quite familiar record. In 1923 she returned to America for a while and resumed the active presidency of Hadassah. From its limited and highly selective character as an expanded study group, the organization was growing steadily in membership and scope and assuming more and more its ultimate character as a peculiarly representative, mass organization of American Jewish women. In 1927 Henrietta Szold returned to Palestine as a member of the three-man Executive of the World Zionist Organization

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the portfolio for Health and Education. The Yishuv was in the throes of an internal crisis. The Zionist Organization had overextended its budget in prematurely grandiose schemes for development and was bankrupt. Unemployment was critical. Relations with the British Mandatory government were strained to the breaking point. The Arabs threatened. Most of Henrietta Szold's time in those years was spent juggling non-existent budgets, sometimes, as in the case of the school system, to the fine point of two or three pounds. She was bitter about the school system—made up of three separate school systems operated by the labor, capitalist, and religious parties with their separate curricula reflecting their respective party ideologies—which she considered vicious in itself for the education of the young and insane at a time when classes had to be shut down for lack of funds. She was also at swords' points with many American Zionists over matters of policy.

In 1930 she returned once again to America, this time discouraged and despondent. But Hadassah had much for her to do in the way of stirring up the membership, as she by her very presence was able to do; and her seventieth birthday was celebrated with great fanfare. It is not far-fetched to imagine that she, who had spoken so much (and was to speak again) of her longing to return home, could no longer find being in America meaningful. As she wrote of her birthday round with Hadassah: ". . . I feel like a bubble filled, not even with gas, but with that 'inspirational' fluid I am expected to give out all the time. The worst of such a regime is that it unfits one for the real things." The "real things" she had now tasted for good—building institutions and making them work—in Palestine. Very likely it was a fear that her Palestine days were over that made her despondent. And so, when in 1931 she was called again—not by the Zionist Organization but by the Yishuv itself—she hurried gratefully back. This time another portfolio, in some ways her most cherished one, for Social Welfare, was given her by the Vaad Leumi, the General Council of the Asefat Hanivharim, the elected representative body of Jewish Palestine. Her new position meant two things: personally, it meant her full acceptance by the Yishuv, without the suspicions or reservations that had interfered with their early relations (an unprecedented crossing of political lines had made possible her being seated on the Vaad Leumi); administratively it meant the opportunity for doing something she had dreamed of since 1920, the establishment of an indigenous Palestinian social welfare program. Her insistence that such a program was necessary had previously fallen on deaf ears; the labor ideologists thought it smacked too much of capitalist-style palliation; others had been indifferent. Now, without funds, and backed by very little general interest in the program, she hopefully organized classes and discussion groups in the problems of Palestinian social welfare. She was yet to have her way: in 1937 the Vaad Leumi and the municipality of Tel Aviv jointly opened a work village called Kfar Avodah for delinquent boys.

Some years before Kfar Avodah, however, in 1933, she embarked on her most memorable project. Characteristically, she was just about to leave for home when the new job presented itself.

HITLER had come to power in Germany and the Yishuv began to mobilize its money and resources for a German immigration. In Berlin a woman named Recha Freier had conceived the idea of sending German adolescents to live on the kvutzot as part of their secondary education and for this purpose had begun organizing the children into the Juedische Jugendshilfe. In 1932 Henrietta Szold had opposed the plan and refused Mrs. Freier's request to take over the work. She had felt strongly that it was wrong to take children from their families and commit them to a life in the Palestine settlements before they were old enough to make such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a decision for themselves. One year later, with Hitler firmly in power, she understood there was no choice and became the director of a new agency called Youth Aliyah. Her fears for the responsibility she and Youth Aliyah and the Yishuv were assuming reflected themselves in every aspect of the program, and she was adamant about the arrangements. The children in Germany were to be fully prepared, on training farms and by thorough orientation courses, for the life they were about to lead. Their secondary education (in the beginning all the children transferred to Palestine were fifteen to seventeen years of age) must be completed under the aegis of Youth Aliyah. Henrietta Szold selected the kvutzot on which the children were to be settled and made detailed agreements with their members; she herself carefully inspected the housing and other facilities. As each boatload of young people arrived in Palestine, she was at Haifa harbor waiting. She personally interviewed most of the children and in the central office of Youth Aliyah kept voluminous files on the personal adjustment, aptitudes, and special problems of each and every child. The children were supervised in their various settlements by *madrichim*—the *madrich* was a combination youth leader, teacher, and case worker—who were obligated to keep in constant close touch with Henrietta Szold. After two years of Youth Aliyah training, the children were to choose an occupation and place to live.

By 1938, of course, these very high standards had to break down. By then, children all over Europe had to be transferred as quickly as possible to Palestine; setting limits to their age or requiring that they be properly prepared was out of the question. The British were both difficult and unpredictable about issuing immigration certificates; sometimes the children languished in temporary camps and sometimes boatloads of them had to be dispersed and settled in a matter of hours. Still an amazing degree of personal contact and individual accommodation was maintained in the Youth Aliyah procedure. Henrietta Szold simply continued to regard these children as her own charges, and—until the war closed Europe off totally—as children belonging to families elsewhere. Twice after 1933 she went to Berlin on business, once in 1935 and once, with special permission of the Gestapo, in 1937. Twice she had to face meetings with hundreds of parents, tearing at her for word of their children already in Palestine or for promises that she would take out those still in Germany. It was in some way those parents, and all the ones unconfronted, who presided over her plans and methods; at least until the children who came under her care were the ragged bands who had wandered through Europe and the Middle East, or those for whom home had been the Nazi camps.

Once again Hadassah took responsibility for Henrietta Szold's most pressing work. Its convention of 1935 voted to take on the raising of funds for Youth Aliyah in the United States (which under the circumstances meant about 75 per cent of the total budget). The organization was pledged to raise $30,000 a year for two years, a sum representing the amount of money required to keep and educate one hundred children. However, during those first two years Hadassah was able to transmit to Youth Aliyah no less than $250,766. By 1948 a total of 30,000 children, including those rescued before the war and those taken after the war from the camps of Europe and the Arab countries, had come under the care of the program. During the first decade of the State of Israel an expanded Youth Aliyah (now including those Palestine-Israel adolescents who needed some sort of special disposition) provided for 60,000 more. From 1935 to 1959 Hadassah had contributed $38,000,000—this in addition to its responsibility for the Hadassah Medical Organization, the hospital and medical school, a child welfare program, and a vocational high school.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On her eightieth birthday, Henrietta Szold invited a group of friends to hear her read her will. She was not to die for another four years, but she had saved a sum of money—an accumulation of gifts given her by Hadassah and individual friends—and she wished to preside over the execution of her last project. This was to be a children's fund, patterned after the Pro Juventute of Switzerland, which would provide a center for research and publication, and the coordination of national youth activities. After her death, in February 1945, the children's bureau was named the Mosad Szold.

So much of the drama of Henrietta Szold's career is bound up with the apocalyptic Hitler period in Palestine and with the unbelievable matter-of-course heroism of the Yishuv in those days that it becomes practically impossible to separate the woman from her institutional dimensions. All political partisanship aside, who can doubt the systematic, instinctive, incredibly heroic self-sacrifice of the Yishuv during the 30's and 40's? Desperation was part of it, true—and what the Israelis call "no alternative"—but there was something else we cannot quite manage to understand and can speak of even at the most detached only with a touch of oratory. Everything in Henrietta Szold's own style militates against thinking of her against a background of apocalypse; but her final destiny—the mother of 90,000 Jewish orphans—makes it impossible not to.

Yet the real meaning of her service to the Yishuv lay elsewhere. In 1921, after one year in Jerusalem, she wrote to her family:

> The new people—a war-created generation—who are coming here are wonderful. But I cannot, cannot accept them. I want to—and I cannot. I love order. Disorder nauseates me. And they are systemless. . . . Yet *they* are heroic, not I. If indeed I am fine and aristocratic as you say I am, why do I not embrace them?

These "new people" were the East European pioneers—the halutzim—who were coming into the country armed with their socialism and their ideologies of labor and a Jewish return to the soil. The feeble economy of those times offered them nothing in the way of occupation but a little road-building. Economic problems, however—in fact, all that order of things the rational world calls by the name of hard realities—were beside the point: the halutzim established their communes and cooperatives, made themselves into farmers and laborers, not out of the existence of possibility but solely from their possession of a new truth.

Henrietta Szold could not embrace them, while passionately admiring their heroism, because they represented the overturning of her world and her apprehension of it as no evil she might ever encounter could. Ideology was as real an element in the social topography of Palestine as the hardship, poverty, disease, disorganization she *was* equipped to contend with—indeed, in the end it proved realer than any of them. The systemlessness she complained of was actually something other than that: it was a new system of its own, which enthroned a kind of order both uncongenial to and never fully comprehended by her. The halutz was peculiarly a creature of order; everything material, to come into being for him, had first to be adjusted and shaped to his abstractions. And without his abstractions, the Jewish National Home—itself the highest abstraction—could neither have existed nor have been prepared for the most concrete moment in its history—namely, the moment when it undertook to save the salvageable remnant of European Jewry.

If the early socialist pioneers in Palestine were a species of madmen—and it has become the better part of both reason and Zionist theology to think so—it is important to remember that Henrietta Szold was no less mad in her own way. In a contemporary world dominated by

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the grandeur of social forces and historic movements, she was afflicted with the wild-eyed conviction that people move forward by placing one foot in front of another. She said good public health depends on a good hospital, good education depends on good attitudes among the children, and she said: Do you want to rescue children? Very well then, let us establish proper training farms. Enraged as she was by a politically divided school system that was as inevitable to Palestine as the sun or the rain, it was she who found the means to keep the schools open and the teachers teaching when economics and social reality said no. Thus without the anachronism of Henrietta Szold's spirit, much would have had to remain unadjusted to the halutz's order.

It is perhaps in relation to the Arab problem that her peculiar position in the Yishuv was worked through most completely. Practically on her arrival in Palestine she began to fret about Arab hostility —blaming now the Jews, now the British, now the Arabs—and she accurately saw the problem as the obstacle against which the entire Palestinian community might founder. "Here lies my attitude," she wrote in August 1937: "we must have another five years of sympathetic trial to solve the Arab-Jewish problem. I believe there is a solution; and if we cannot find it, then I consider that Zionism has failed utterly." Here again, and most significantly, she ignored historical inevitability, which might now be stated in the simple proposition that the Arabs did not want the Jews in Palestine and that if the Jews remained, there was going to be war. It was this view—that Zionism must stand justified by an amicable settlement with the Arabs—which brought her to join Ihud, a group dedicated to the principle of a bi-national state. The official Zionist movement has had bitter thoughts and feelings about Ihud, which it is not necessary to rehearse here; in any event, Henrietta Szold was exempted from them. To those to whom the proposal for a bi-national community seemed a breach of discipline at a time when discipline above all was called for, she at least needed to present no credentials of a thoroughgoing Zionist loyalty. Apart from the ultimate political fate of bi-nationalism, and apart from all the just arguments that can be mustered on either side of the question, Henrietta Szold's membership in Ihud is of a piece with her entire approach to the movement she served: the real problems of the Jewish state must have concrete, and concretely Jewish, solutions, or else the purpose will have been cut off from those whose purpose the Jewish state is.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel, the Zionist movement has faced still another crisis. No one really knows what Zionism means any more—or what it can be made to mean. In America, Zionist organizations are languishing for want of an ultimate goal—such as the creation of a Jewish state once was—to which to direct their longings and energies. Hadassah, too, insofar as it is an organization deeply committed to the *ideas* of Zionism, is now going through the troublesome business of redefining its larger purpose. But Hadassah, alone within the whole Zionist movement, carries the unique legacy of Henrietta Szold. Ideologies come and go but orphans and the sick and the socially or psychologically disabled will be with us forever; Zionism will come to mean this thing or that—or, in a happier world, maybe nothing—but the 318,000 members of Hadassah, regardless of what they may finally come to say about their relations with the State of Israel, will not be left looking for ways to concretize their attachment to it. Perhaps Henrietta Szold —the stranger to the Yishuv who was not a stranger, the holder of enormous power who remained staunchly non-political, the woman who did the work cut out for her and left behind a string of useful institutions—perhaps she has provided the clue for the future behavior of those who wish to call themselves Zionists while continuing to live outside the State of Israel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DAVID MARQUAND

ENGLAND'S LABOR PARTY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

EVER since its birth sixty years ago, the British Labor party has appeared to be on the point of collapse. Again and again, the mourners have assembled in the graveyard—only to find the prospective corpse dancing merrily on top of the coffin. Over the years Labor politicians have developed uncanny skill at plunging their daggers into each other's backs, hard enough to wound but not to kill. The Labor movement has stumbled on, raucous, quarrelsome, undignified—but splendidly alive. But now it seems to have ground to a halt. Labor has lost three elections in a row; and the party is split down the middle. It may yet recover: stranger things have happened in British history. But short of a miracle it is hard to see how it can escape a devastating civil war, from which it must emerge severely crippled, if not actually destroyed.

Many Labor members of Parliament would deny this. They cannot deny that the Labor party conference at Scarborough early in October rejected the defense policy prepared by the Executive, though it made more concessions to the left than any previous defense platform had done: it recognized that an independent British nuclear deterrent is not possible; demanded that NATO should reduce its dangerous dependence on tactical nuclear weapons; warned of the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries; and called for reforms in the structure of the Western alliance. But it clearly and explicitly reaffirmed its belief in the continued necessity of the alliance—and it was evidently this that the majority would not accept. Yet the majority was a small one, and the vote defeating the Executive policy was, in fact, less than representative. The conference rejected "any defense policy based on the threat of the use of tactical or strategic nuclear weapons" by a vote of 3,282,000 to 3,239,000; it demanded the "unilateral renunciation of the manufacture, stockpiling and basing of nuclear weapons in Great Britain" by a vote of only 3,303,000 to 2,836,000. But there can be little doubt that most of the delegates actually present in the hall voted with the Executive. It was the votes of some of the big unions affiliated to the Labor party that carried the anti-nuclear resolutions; and the mandates of the unions had been decided before the Executive policy had even been drawn up. The constituency parties, representing the individual rank and file members, voted 6 to 4 in favor of the Executive. This suggests that by the next conference, after a year of intensive propaganda by the leadership, the decision can be reversed. Hence, it is said by some optimists, the crisis is only temporary.

Temporary it may be: but to an outsider, at least, it looks certain to last much longer than just a year. The "unilateralist" resolutions were passed in open defiance of

DAVID MARQUAND is a young British journalist now on the staff of the Manchester *Guardian*. His article, "England, the Bomb, the Marchers," appeared in our May 1960 number.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the party leader and against the advice of the party's chief spokesmen on foreign affairs and defense. In the course of his speech, Hugh Gaitskell declared that if the vote went against him, he would "fight, fight, and fight again" to reverse it. He has carried out his threat, supported by two-thirds of his Labor colleagues in Parliament. Yet according to the party constitution, the final authority for policy-making lies with the annual conference; and the rift has already provoked open strife in the Parliamentary party. For the first time since 1922, an incumbent leader has been challenged at the annual election of officers in Parliament: Gaitskell was re-elected on November 3 by 166 votes to 81, but his authority has undeniably suffered. It will be almost impossible for the moderate majority to discipline the extremists of the left; nor will Gaitskell be able to count on a majority in the National Executive, which includes the union leaders and is legally responsible not to the Parliamentary party, but to the annual conference. More important even, it is by no means certain that the leadership will prevail in a year's time: the emotions behind unilateralism are deep and genuine. It is true that 60 per cent of the constituency party delegates at Scarborough supported Gaitskell's policy, and that many of the union leaders voted against him not because they wanted to, but because they were bound by their own union conferences; and it is equally true that Khrushchev's behavior at Paris last May created the worst possible international climate for unilateralism. But the U-2 affair cut both ways. If the next United States administration puts a foot wrong in its relations with the Soviet Union; if it starts nuclear tests again, or acts in what looks like an aggressive fashion toward Cuba, opinion in the rank and file of the Labor party may become violently anti-American.

BUT EVEN if the next party conference should reverse the Scarborough decision, would that really be the end of the matter? The split in the Labor party is a fundamental one, not confined to foreign affairs and defense. Scarborough was only the last and noisiest of a series of explosions. When Labor went out of office in 1951, it was already split over the rearmament program made necessary by the Korean war. In 1954, the rift was deepened still further by the implications of German rearmament. For a short time in 1955 the then leader of the party's left wing—Aneurin Bevan—was actually suspended from the Parliamentary group. After Gaitskell's election to the leadership in 1955, there was a brief, unconvincing, and unconsummated honeymoon between the left and the right. Bevan and Gaitskell made peace, and the divisions in the party were temporarily buried. But an acute listener could still detect subterranean rumbles, and from time to time the volcano seemed on the point of erupting once again. During the election campaign in the fall of 1959, it is true, the party seemed more united than at any time in the last fifteen years; and Gaitskell's leadership was apparently accepted in the most unlikely quarters with something approaching enthusiasm. But after the election defeat, Gaitskell's reputation came crashing down; the old volcano did erupt —and it was found that the molten lava had lost none of its heat.

The election defeat itself was partly to blame for this. British politics is a cruel sport, in which the captain of a losing team must expect to be kicked to death by his own side. To vary the metaphor, there is a tribal quality about British political parties: so long as the tribe is on top, its chief is revered and given a great deal of power. But let the tribe run into a period of bad luck, and the chief is liable to end in the cook-pot. British history offers only one parallel to the Labor party's recent record of three defeats in a row: the three defeats suffered by the Conservatives between 1906 and 1914. Prolonged failure has led to schism and rebellion. Balfour, the Conservative leader, received the same

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ferocious treatment from right-wing Tories that Gaitskell has been getting lately from left-wing socialists. Labor's defeat in last year's elections was in no sense Gaitskell's fault—without him, in fact, Labor would almost certainly have fared worse. Yet Gaitskell's troubles have been aggravated by his personality. Successful British politicians, it has been said, must be in character either bishops or bookmakers. Gladstone was a bishop. Disraeli was a bookmaker. Harold Macmillan is one of the most polished and versatile bookmakers in our recent history. Gaitskell is neither. He is a university don. He lacks the flaming moral passion of the bishop—and he lacks, even more disastrously, the tactical agility of the bookmaker. During the past year, the most critical in his party's history, he has made almost no effort to stump the country for his policies, and he has taken a stubborn delight in fighting his critics not where *they* are weakest, but where *he* is weakest. He is, moreover, the walking embodiment of Aristotle's "magnanimous man": reasonable, calm, virtuous—and a little stiff. In private he is said to be warm and emotional; in public the warmth is apt to be concealed beneath the armor plating of the British middle class. Indeed, Gaitskell as a politician is strangely reminiscent of Adlai Stevenson: he has all the gifts needed by a political leader—except being good at politics. Worst of all, he is a middle-class intellectual, and yet on the right wing of the party. One of the unwritten rules of Labor party politics is that intellectuals are allowed only on the left. Union leaders can safely stand on the right: they may be bitterly attacked, but they cannot be accused of patronizing the rest of the movement—whatever they do, they will be one of "us," not one of "them." But a middle-class intellectual is always apt to be suspect in a predominantly working-class party. If he takes care to present himself as a left-winger, in tune with the party's emotions, he can work his passage and win acceptance. But if his speeches contain more appeals to moderation and sanity than to passion and principle, he can easily sound like a prig or a snob—an outsider come to lecture, not an insider trying to persuade. Gaitskell himself has managed to escape this danger, though not entirely. But he has made one of the worst mistakes a politician can make: he has acquired friends. Some of them can claim to have harmed him almost as much as his enemies have. Indeed, according to one view, the real author of Labor's present discontents is the so-called "Hampstead set": a group of intellectuals who happen to live near Gaitskell, and who are alleged to spend their Sunday mornings sipping sherry with their leader, plotting the downfall of socialism. This malicious caricature is based on the true fact that Gaitskell has seemed to prefer the company of university-trained intellectuals to that of Labor leaders who have come up the hard way. And his friends—men like Anthony Crosland, Roy Jenkins, and Douglas Jay—give the impression of being far to the right of the party's center of gravity. That impression may be false—but appearances matter, in politics as in matrimony; and to the average member of Labor's rank and file, the Hampstead set appears arrogant, supercilious, and—un-socialist.

"UN-SOCIALIST": there is the key. The really important differences in the Labor party are at bottom ideological, not personal—though no one seems to know for certain what the ideological differences are about. The commonest way of describing them is to say that Labor is divided between a "doctrinaire" and a "pragmatic" wing. As a form of political shorthand, readily available to the editorial writer, this description has its merits, but it conceals more than it describes. What exactly is the doctrine which the "doctrinaires" hold so dear? No one knows: least of all they themselves. British socialism, unlike continental Social Democracy, has no sacred

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

books. It has always owed more to Methodism than to Marxism—and this is at least as true of the left as it is of the right. A few members of the left are, or have been, fellow-travelers, but even they are generally Christian socialists gone soft, not full-blooded Marxists. And in any case, the vast majority of the left are not fellow-travelers at all. They may occasionally indulge in wishful thinking about the Soviet Union—but then they indulge in wishful thinking about everything.

If anyone in the Labor party has a doctrine, indeed, it is the intellectuals of the "pragmatic" right. During the past ten years, three British socialists have produced writings of merit: Aneurin Bevan, John Strachey, and Anthony Crosland. Of the three, only Bevan belonged to the left wing of the party—and after reading his book, *In Place of Fear,* one is little the wiser about his theoretical beliefs. John Strachey is in a different category. His two volumes (*Contemporary Capitalism* and *The End of Empire*) are a real contribution to socialist thought—and what is more, they are heavily influenced by Marx. But Strachey is no longer a left-winger; he supports Gaitskell and is firmly committed to NATO. Crosland is an even more revealing example. He is perhaps the most important ideologue of the right, and certainly the most creative of the younger intellectuals in the party. His book, *The Future of Socialism,* is massive and erudite as well as brilliant. But whatever else it may be, it is certainly not "pragmatic." A large section is occupied by an almost scholastic discussion on whether capitalism is still capitalism—or something else. Another section is occupied by an elaborate attempt to prove that almost every socialist writer who ever lived really thought what Crosland thinks. Crosland himself is no more pragmatic than his book. He has insisted on his doctrine with the stubbornness of a Calvinist, and has given the impression that he would cheerfully destroy his political future rather than sacrifice his views.

The right, then, has its doctrines. But only the left has a Faith. That is the real difference between them. The left-wingers are the true descendants of the early pioneers, the Chartists of the 19th Century, and the Levellers of the 17th. For them, the progress of political action is not to win power: it is to make a new heaven and a new earth. The left sometimes does not know what it is fighting for—but it always knows what it is fighting against. Its real enemy is the gray confusion of ordinary life, the tawdry compromises of practical politics, the inevitable pettiness of living people—all summed up in the single word, "capitalism." To the left, capitalism is not simply an economic system which evolves; one might as well suggest to a Presbyterian of the old school that the Devil evolves. Capitalism is incorrigible; and the changes that occasionally appear on its surfaces are simply camouflage to trap the unwary. To an outsider, the left's brand of socialism seems increasingly remote from the real world. To the faithful, it is the "old-time religion," immaculate and inviolable—and if the real world does not like it, that merely proves that the real world is corrupt. Mrs. Barbara Castle, chairman of the party last year, unconsciously revealed the fundamentalist psychology of the left in an address she made at the 1959 conference to a group which had met to consider the implications of the party's third successive electoral defeat. In the circumstances, even she might have admitted that perhaps all was not well with the party's Creed. On the contrary, her verdict was: "It is chasing fantasies to imagine that we can win elections on moral issues in a democracy built on such amoral foundations." That is, the electors aren't good enough for the Labor party!

OVER fifty years ago, Graham Wallas, one of the early Fabians, described the socialism of the left as follows. "The need of something which one may love and for which one may work has created

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for thousands of working men a personified 'Socialism,' a winged goddess with stern eyes and drawn sword, to be the hope of the world and the protector of those that suffer." To the devotees of the winged goddess, faith is all: works are nothing. Indeed, one suggests that for some of the left, defeat is a sign of Grace.

The strong ecclesiastical character of the Labor movement has never been better illustrated than by its current controversy about public ownership. The crucial clause of the party constitution, adopted in 1918 after years of effort by what was at first a minority of socialists, runs as follows: "To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service." This is the notorious "Clause 4" of the constitution, now colloquially known as the "Old Testament." After the party's defeat last year, Gaitskell tried to delete Clause 4 and substitute a broader statement of aims which would no longer commit the party to wholesale public ownership. His ostensible reason was tactical. "Nationalization" has become the favorite boo-word of British politics, guaranteed to torpedo the electoral hopes of any party that advocates it. So long as Clause 4 remains, Gaitskell's argument ran, the press will terrorize the electorate with the scarecrow of wholesale nationalization, and no matter how attractive the rest of Labor's program may be, the Conservatives will go on winning elections. Beneath this tactical argument there was, however, a theoretical assumption: the Labor party constitution was drawn up before Keynes had shattered the noble edifice of classical economics. To the early socialists it seemed self-evident that the cycle of booms and slumps could only be eliminated by public ownership. Keynesian economics destroyed the assumptions on which this doctrine rested —and the experience of the postwar world appeared to show that Keynes was right. Governments, it seemed, could control the economy and maintain full employment without nationalization. But in that case, why nationalize?

THAT, in essence, was Gaitskell's question. True, Gaitskell and most of his supporters have never denied that public ownership can be a useful device for improving economic efficiency or preventing monopoly. But for the left, public ownership is far more than a useful device: it is the very essence of socialism. Gaitskell's assault on Clause 4 was greeted with rage. Few members of the party had ever read the constitution; and still fewer really believed that the party would in the foreseeable future nationalize the means of production, distribution, and exchange. But the platform had become as sacred to members of the Labor party as the United States constitution to the people of America—and for a rather similar reason. The Labor party, after all, has a short history. Unlike the Conservatives or the Liberals, it cannot point to a long gallery of Victorian statesmen. The constitution is all the history it has; and the commitment to public ownership was a kind of pledge to keep faith with the pioneers. In attacking Clause 4, Gaitskell infuriated not only the left, but large numbers of trade unionists and members of Parliament for whom verbal support of public ownership had become a form of genuflection at the shrine of their lost youth. Bit by bit, he was beaten back. First, he asked for a new statement of aims to replace Clause 4. Then it was suggested that perhaps Clause 4 and the new statement might stand side by side, the second "clarifying" the first. Finally, a compromise was hammered out: Clause 4 was to remain, alone and unclarified, but the new statement was incorporated in the Executive's report to the party conference as a matter of interest. Meanwhile, the emotional re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

action had crystallized into an argument, or rather two arguments.

The first, and somewhat unsophisticated, rejoinder was that the Labor party had lost three elections not because it was too socialist but because it was not socialist enough. The extreme left of the Labor party bears a suspicious resemblance to the extreme right of the Republican party in the United States: both appear to believe that the recipe for influencing electors is to tell them what they don't want to hear in the loudest possible voice. "Metooism," it was said, was the real curse of the Labor party. The electors would never vote for a party without the courage of its convictions. The only hope for Labor was to make a full-scale attack on "capitalism." Moreover, it was argued, the party workers saw no point in persuading their friends and neighbors to vote for a milk-and-water program. Gaitskell's timidity was sending these gallant shock troops to sleep. Only when they returned to the firing line could Labor hope to win.

The second argument, by contrast, was dazzling in its sophistication and audacity. As Mr. Richard Crossman sees it, radical governments only come to power in Britain if there is a real crisis. If Labor sneaked into power now, as a result of assiduous servility to the prejudices of the electorate, it would not be able to force through a really socialist program. Power, in fact, is the last thing Labor should be seeking now. For in spite of Keynes, capitalism is heading for a catastrophe, different in origin from that prophesied by Marx—but similar in effect. If Labor resolutely rejects the temptations of vote-catching, if it plays the part of Cassandra and gives warning of the wrath to come, if above all it insists on the full rigor of socialism as the only solution—then when catastrophe does come, Labor will reap its reward. This approach was based on an unlikely foundation, the writings of John Kenneth Galbraith; for *The Affluent Society* has become the Bible of the left. Crossman claims that Galbraith has shown the apparent stability of contemporary capitalism to be a sham: economic power rests with the great oligopolies; the State may propose—the Organization Men dispose. Hence, "private opulence and public squalor"; hence the absence of adequate capital investment; hence the growing superiority of the Soviet Union—and hence the coming crisis.

THESE IDEOLOGICAL differences are concerned chiefly with domestic politics. Yet the great conflicts which have periodically torn the Labor party to pieces in the last ten years have almost all been over foreign policy and defense. Nationalization, however fundamental its importance, has been a damp squib compared with the rearmament program, German rearmament, SEATO, and the H-bomb. Why? Is there any logical connection between the left's stand on public ownership and its foreign policy? Why should the battles over foreign policy and defense have been so much the more savage?

There is, in fact, no logical connection, just as there is no purely rational explanation for the greater bitterness of argument over foreign affairs. But the divisions in the party are not based on reason alone: their source is emotional. To the right, the object of political activity is to win power and carry out piecemeal reforms. To the left, the object is utopia and the method a crusade against evil—and of all evils, the evil of war is the worst; of all utopias, the most attractive is a world at peace, without conflict.

The non-conformist culture which nurtured so many of the early socialist pioneers was profoundly pacifist in feeling. Anglican priests might glorify British arms; non-conformist ministers decidedly did not. Before 1914, pacifism was one of the main roots of the Labor movement: captialism went hand in hand with war; after 1918, these pacifist sentiments were strengthened by the memory of slaughter in Flanders. Hitler and the Spanish Civil War almost killed pacifism as a formal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political force; they did not kill the emotions on which pacifism fed. After 1945, these emotions returned to the surface again—only to be outraged by the course of postwar history. The left then had to search for a scapegoat: as utopians, they could not believe that conflict is the normal condition of international politics. They found their scapegoat in the Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin. Throughout the Labor government's term in office in 1945–51, Bevin was the target of abuse from the Labor back benches: he had been captured by the Foreign Office; he had sold out to the Americans; he treated the mighty Soviet Union like a breakaway from his own Transport and General Workers Union. What these criticisms really meant was that Bevin recognized the role of force in international relations, and appreciated that the Soviet threat was the prime fact of postwar politics; and in doing so he undermined the illusions of the left. After Bevin died and Labor went out of office, a new scapegoat had to be found. In the early 50's it was John Foster Dulles. Now it is NATO as such.

In isolation, these ideological and emotional divisions, even the divisions over foreign policy, might not matter. Unfortunately they have been superimposed on an already gloomy situation. Since 1950, Labor has been swimming against the sociological tide—and the knowledge that the tide was first set in motion by the postwar Labor government does nothing to sweeten the experience. The most obvious reason for Labor's defeats is the growth in material prosperity. In the past decade, parts of Britain have entered the age of mass consumption—and the new consumers are grateful to the government under which this has happened. But material prosperity has had less obvious results as well. As in the United States, the politics of class are giving way to the politics of status. The British are still a very class-conscious people, but they are less class-conscious than they were. Young people especially are almost as indifferent to class as their contemporaries in America. This change has had a paradoxical result. The electors might have been expected to turn to Labor as the traditional enemies of class privilege. On the contrary, they have turned to the Conservatives—because Labor reminds them of a past they wish to forget.

THE LABOR party was created to break through the walls of privilege and give the workers a place in the sun. It was, above all, a *class* party: even its name—"Labor" rather than "Socialist"—is evidence of this. It drew its strength less from an idea than from an almost instinctive response to the bitter memories of the Industrial Revolution. Its votes came from the gray cotton towns of the Northwest, the scarred industrial wilderness of the Black Country, the slag heaps of South Wales and Durham, the filthy slums of Glasgow, and the East End of London. Its earliest leaders—Keir Hardie, the miner; Ramsay MacDonald, the illegitimate son of a housemaid; Arthur Henderson, the iron smelter—were drawn from the authentic working class. Poverty had denied them any chance of education or advancement—and Labor politics was for them an opportunity for legitimate personal ambition, as well as for service to their fellows. From the beginning, Labor gave a hospitable welcome to middle-class allies, but the leaders for whom it reserved its warmth were working class, and proud of it. What has happened in the last ten years is that prosperity has started to wither the roots of a proletarian party. Technological change is killing the old industries and creating new occupations unsoured by the memory of old oppression. The filthy industrial slums are coming down at last; and their inhabitants are moving out to new housing estates in the suburbs. Above all, the educational ladder has been extended down to the bottom. Compared with the United States, the proportion of the population that goes to a university is still scandalously low, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it is high enough to cream off the ablest children of the working class. The Hardies, MacDonalds, and Hendersons of today are segregated from their less able playmates at the age of eleven, and they finish their education at twenty-two instead of at fifteen. The result of these changes is that the objective need for a primarily class-oriented progressive party has diminished—and at the same time, its attractiveness has declined. Recent surveys show that for more and more people, Labor is the party of the underdog, the hopeless and helpless: the aged, the poor, the unskilled. But fewer and fewer people are willing to think of themselves as underdogs. For young people, especially, the Labor party is redolent of a forgotten past.

The obvious moral is that Labor should throw off this dreary image. But it can hardly repudiate its past without breaking its ties with the unions—and it depends on the unions for most of its funds. Over a third of the Labor MP's are union nominees. Over half the party Executive is elected by the unions. The union vote at the annual party conference outnumbers the votes of constituency party delegates. The operation may be necessary—but the patient cannot be blamed for resisting it. Unattractive though it is, the Labor party still has a solid wedge of safe seats in Parliament and twelve million votes in the country. Most of those seats and many of those votes come not from the new Britain of today but from the old Britain of the 1930's. A Labor party with no union ties might win votes in the new suburban housing estates and from the white-collar workers in expanding industries, but would it appeal to the miners in South Wales and Durham, or to old-age pensioners all over the country? In the long run, the party would gain by dropping the union connection, but in politics the run is always short.

THERE ARE, however, two reasons for believing that Labor may soon be forced to undergo a political face-lift. The first is the Liberal revival. For years, the Liberal party was the coelacanth of British politics; extinct according to the textbooks, illogically alive in fact. In the past few years the Liberals have transformed themselves. Although they are in fact a very old party, they look very new. They are therefore perfectly situated to benefit from the social changes which have harmed Labor. The Liberals are progressive and lively; more responsive to the interests of the consumer than the other two parties; idealistic without being fanatical; egalitarian without being tied to any one class. The same surveys which show that the Labor party is seen as the party of the underdog show that the Liberals are seen as the party of the progressive-minded, the alert, the ambitious. If the Labor party remains set in its ways, the Liberal voters will eventually overtake it. When that happens, Labor voters will desert en masse. British voters have a healthy distaste for wasting their votes. For thirty years, Liberals have voted Labor to keep the Conservatives out. If the Liberals began to advance, would-be Labor voters would desert to the Liberals. This is still a distant prospect, but Labor's civil war has brought it nearer.

The struggle in the Labor party is, in fact, the strongest reason for believing that Labor will be forced to change. If the left wins, the right will for all practical purposes be forced out of the party—into alliance with the Liberals. If the Gaitskellites win, they will be strong enough to stamp their image on the party—and there will no longer be any need for a Liberal party. In either case, the end result is the same. There will be a small, extremist party opposed to NATO and advocating old-style nationalization; and a larger, more moderate, force, committed to NATO and with a more empirical social policy. The moderate party might be called either "Liberal" or "Labor," depending on circumstances. But the name does not matter. The important question is how long it takes to come into existence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NORMAN STEIN

THE COMPREHENSIVE INCUBUS

A Story

When Night in her rustie dungeon hath imprisoned our ey-sight, and that we are shut separately in our chambers from resort, the divell keepeth his audit in our sin-guilty consciences, no sense but surrenders to our memorie a true bill of parcels of his detestable impietis. The table of our hart is turned to an index of iniquities, and all our thoughts are nothing but texts to condemn us. The rest we take in our beds is such another kinde of rest as the weerie traveller taketh in the coole, soft grasse in summer, who thinking there to lye at ease, and refresh his tyred limmes, layeth his fainting head unawares on a loathsome neast of snakes.
—Thomas Nashe

THIS IS my confession. An account of the events and circumstances leading to the murder of Doctor Felix Nussman.

Doctor Felix Nussman arrived three years ago, in early October. He took possession of the ground-floor apartment identical to and opposite mine; five hexed rooms occupied by a succession of unsuccessful lawyers and physicians. His arrival, as were his medical predecessors', was openly reviewed by a considerable gathering; the public auditing his belongings and assessing him (shabby instrument cabinets) for trust—with reverse blessing, God forbid—in the middle of some night, and secondarily debating (paper cartons, bundles, books) whether he'd sustain himself (pieces of much tried plain furniture) by drugs or abortions. Were it either, if only it were, I'd give . . . strange, what exchange could I make, stranger yet I can't even fantasize how life would be without my present determination.

Where has he arrived at? A part of New York City described by my student-self, many years ago, while courting successfully a baker's daughter and being so pleased by her admiration of these lines, not realizing this was the lowest rung on the progression of pleasures required by tradesmen's daughters. Lines I include along with the scant papers this present exegesis concludes with. (Why not, there's no other place for them.)

> There must have been a first one, lost somewhere; a first model from which these buildings come. These counterfeits. But, as they are so perfect, is the original important after all? Buildings painted without color, recalled a moment later as shades of dark. Buildings with fire escapes shoelacing the windows. They were put side by side, roof to roof, block after block, on and on until the horizons were gone. Too late, the only place left to look was up.

Written, now, I must admit it seems an overly long and sententious way of saying "tenements." Of commenting that this, here, was no place to bring a career. Here where the gravity is more intense, this Sovereignty of Burdens, a place to fall to.

The lurch!

For my own career, I did once actually inquire after a professional suite uptown during that personal incandescence when grief for my mother's passing abated. But, then I even entertained hopes for a family as well as success.

However, getting on . . . at first, inter-

THIS is the third of NORMAN STEIN's stories to be published in COMMENTARY. The first, "A Second Chance for Samson," appeared in our August 1957 issue, and the second, "Vox Populi, Vox Goldkorn," in the March 1960 number. Mr. Stein was born in Brooklyn in 1930 and educated at New York University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

course between Nussman and myself was slight, reflexive politeness and courtesies. This, on my part, was due to more than my natural reticence. My profession, dentistry, requires a social insulation, being a caste beneath that of medicine and law, one drifting down toward that province of regard where pharmaceutists, optometrists, and chiropodists dwell. No matter really, this reserve allowed me to observe the doctor with a detachment immediate friendship makes impossible. A detachment which I was, fortunately, able to revive after our intimate relations began.

By observing the tall, thin man it was soon apparent—honing my curiosity finer—that he had suffered no career misfortune. Rather, he was an accomplished medical gypsy, knowing enough to distribute his small shopping throughout the neighborhood stores, to give unhurried curbside consultations, to minister to juvenile gutter casualties, and hastily attend prostrate senescent.

Thus did the doctor sow himself and in a short time reaped a subsisting practice consisting mainly of first aid, blood testing, immunizations, and one- and two-visit influenzas. This puzzled me, as there was no doubt, judging from circulating anecdotes, that he was more than a passingly competent physician . . . a puzzle unsolved until my own influenza.

RETRIBUTIVELY, I suppose, my wife called Nussman instead of Lang, our regular physician. I've always paid a penalty for my debilities which Sylvia determines as caused by irresponsibility and therefore a personal humiliation.

Mine, as the preceding indicates, has not been the best of marriages. There's been a persistent debate going on in myself while writing this, whether or not to include certain facts about it. Surely, they've affected me through the years and must contribute to my present condition and intention.

Also, really, I must admit that this is perhaps the only chance I'll have to get at Myer Rosenbaum. Why shouldn't he be brought into this? He and his Royal Princess Fur Salons in Forest Hills and Scarsdale. He and Sylvia have been carrying on a liaison for more than a decade. She won't leave me and I can't throw her out. She has come and gone never bothering to explain or lie.

For years, I've covered them with curses but I've never cared less than I do now. I mention them, they're only facts.

Anyway, Nussman came to attend me. It is difficult to recall through the haze of fever and discomfort his exact manner during that first visit. Efficient, no doubt, for the morning after an injection and a few tablets I eagerly anticipated the visit he said he would pay that evening.

He came rather late, after eleven, annoying Sylvia to the extent that she ignored us completely. That is, initially.

He was quick in taking my pressure, temperature, pulse, and percussing my chest; prescribing ". . . a few days in bed, books, and tea" in his pleasant European-accented voice.

I inquired, while he collected his instruments, to what amount his check ought to be made but he dismissed his fee as professional courtesy. Pleased and flattered, I offered the bottle of cognac I'd been using medicinally. He accepted and seated himself near my bed.

Sitting there, occupied with his drink, so close to me I had my first opportunity to examine his face for details unavailable to me at the distance we formerly kept. I guessed he was about my age. His hair, a middle shade of gray, was straight, beginning above a high forehead, and needed cutting. The lines of his face were long and square. His light complexion and pale blue eyes gave the effect of a face poorly seen or mis-focused. In all, what I believe is termed in fine literary style, a palimpsest face, where character and strength are written over a poorly erased handsomeness but neither effect succeeding beyond the effect of erasure.

I spoke randomly of my health, the season, my practice, setting up a rambling smoke screen behind which my curiosity paced restlessly; being further agitated at this point by a series of Sylvia's entrances and exits, darting in and out to empty and refill my water carafe, in and out to empty and replace my waste basket, in and out to inquire whether the doctor had sufficient cigarettes. I knew she was building up a case, bustling and scurrying; in a few days I'd recover and she'd be worn out . . . there'd be a crisis and maybe she'd leave again.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Perturbed by the first phase of Sylvia's departure, I cursed myself, I cursed her, I cursed my smiling visitor. Thus, mindless, my autonomous prattlings—touching, prying about where he'd practiced and what he'd done—they too turned malevolent and a question burst free to my shame and horror, "Why in God's name did you come *here*?"

Upset, immobile, I floundered in embarrassment and agitation, only to realize worse . . . he had answered me, an answer I didn't hear! But, I blundered on, pretending I'd heard, guessing it was some indifferent and noncommittal reply and in response I was again enumerating the difficulties of neighborhood practice.

Interrupting, actually fixing me against my propped pillows with his pale blue eyes, that turned hard and bright, he said, "Would it be enough for you for me to say that I have a . . . para-medical interest?"

Lost, completely lost, I who petrify before bank tellers and information windows needing questions and questions to capture the simplest sense because of distrust of myself, ready to publicly defame myself in apology but always spared by my adversary's impatience . . . I faced my strange guest and said abjectly, "Is it enough?" meaning to go on and say that it was more than I deserved to know, to confess my shameful bungling when I noticed *his* discomposure. *Somehow, I had struck a blow!*

A moment before he'd been sitting back comfortably but now he leaned forward, his head lowered, his vaguely drawn features being further effaced by a violent emotion. He put his drink aside, excused himself and quickly departed.

Now, these years later his behavior is, of course, no mystery. My phrase, "Is it enough?" answering his, ending with ". . . para-medical interest," caught him off guard, piercing through to a private doubt he carried, but momentarily forgot was hidden. This brief shattering, I should say "mutual shattering" of self-assurances was the beginning of our exchange of confidences. He, I, could no longer pass each other with just neighbors' salutes. And, I am forced to conclude, it must also be marked as the beginning of my resolve to kill him, for it was at this point that simple curiosity turned to suspicion.

I do not mean by this to slyly evade the stigma of betrayal. For there was and still is as Nussman lives, sleeps, and breathes across the hall, nothing between us. Nothing in the way of friendship to be betrayed. Because, logically, how can two elderly men both in the shadow of the imminent prospect afford even splinters of feeling, sentiment, and whatever else youth squanders building friendship? No, I insist it cannot be. There isn't even a model, some classic, heroic example, something one might expect to find in the Bible or Shakespeare. There, if anything, exists between Felix and myself a crony-ship, and if that can be betrayed, I accept the petty stigma.

WELL, NO MATTER what name is given to our relationship we began by spending one, two, and then many of the week's evenings together. Talking to no single point except to tell the other of self. Nussman had been born in Delatin, a small town in Austria, of modest merchant people. He'd studied medicine in Lausanne. It was here, in his final year, a year he finished with high honors, that he came under the tragic influence of Doctor Zelig Helfmann.

(*I will not interrupt my testimony to deal with Helfmann's cruel and fantastic hypothesis. I will append at the conclusion of my testimony a copy of a speech, translated and given to me by Nussman, which Helfmann delivered on August 28, 1927, at a congress marking the opening of the Fachadété Clinic in Bern. A congress Nussman unfortunately attended. And, it is my further suspicion judging from the amount, diversity, and consistency of Nussman's foreign correspondence that there are other physicians from Nussman's class working surreptitiously under the same cruel aegis.*)

To continue, most especially I remember the first summer. Sylvia had made her hegira to the seashore and her sister, so I had every evening for talk with Felix. Evenings? Rather, night and mornings. The heat making sleep not only impossible but also unnecessary as the days were passed in a sort of coma. Until this time, our opinions had been offered impersonally, aloof, as two experienced and devoted museum visitors would exchange. Having been, seen, and colored with an irony, a sadness that soon the exhibit would close. Or, more precisely, that our passes would soon expire.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is it difficult to understand the pleasure, for me, when in passing he'd remark. . . something like *bonum et laudum,* bringing back to me in a rush my student days. Days when I thought I knew something about life because I knew and was not afraid of *bonum et laudum,* good and praiseworthy . . . the clinical reference to pus, a sign received by us who were ascending above the mysteries . . . *strepto,* green and sweet, *staphaureus,* yellow gold, *staphalba,* pure white and smelling like rancid butter . . . is all this difficult to understand?

And, in this way we came to talk of love, women, and sex. That particular evening—our whiskey and ice—I remember clearly intending to remark on the emptiness in my marriage, the absence of children. I meant a mature and dignified reproach against fortune, but there flew into my mind thoughts which I could not contain but attempted to pass off humorously. I suddenly had to say, "You know, what's always intrigued me about fathering a child, I mean it must be some sort of universal law that fathers must, so to speak, cadge a few . . . sips. Of milk, I mean. For the taste. But, then it occurred to me that no doubt the mother herself would like . . . a sample. And that destroyed my interest." I had an anxious moment trying to force a laugh but it came, encouraged by Felix's chuckle.

"My dear Leo, I give you a toast . . . in this base potion, *die Liebfraumilch!*"

"And . . . the mammalian hangover."

Oh, no. No further. I must interrupt. Can I be taken seriously by merely testifying? After all, I am not only a witness, I am a *will.* Who I really am, what I really am must be explained or else the murder I will commit presently qualifies as little more than an accident.

I shall be brief. In truth, I am a crank who intends to kill a crackpot.

Further, I waive any claim to exculpation. I accept all consequences. Perhaps now, I seem a fool. To accept my destruction, the fear, the humiliation, all that, being photographed manacled to fat detectives. Nevertheless, I accept all, the screams I shall be able to suppress and those I cannot, I accept everything, the pity and charity of my final judgment . . . oh, well, a crank killed a crackpot.

Why, if I see all this, must it inevitably come about?

Have my faculties failed me? No. I am wholly resolved to act thusly. Resolved emotionally and rationally.

I have had, without a doubt, the longest continuous rational existence conceivable. I have been thinking, thinking through all my days and nights. More than fifty years of thought undisturbed by pleasure or frivolity. I know, for example, that to be conventionally rational I ought to go, right now, tonight, into the streets and find a policeman. Together we would break into Nussman's flat and force him to be merciful. To stop, to leave off, to answer for the past. It's even easier than that. I only need telephone for some big goon. Come with me, I'd say, there's a horror that must be ended.

Couldn't I sell tickets to that comedy?

But, no, I cannot protect myself by such a poor specimen of irony while the true and bitter haunt me. I cannot escape the bitter irony that it is actually the coward in me speaking, as he does incessantly. Forcing me here to avoid and abandon my testimony, setting me off in all directions. The coward in me, alone, trembling, and conniving against the positive knowledge of what must be done and paid for.

And, the first irony allowed, others pour in. That I, I who set down this examination of resolution, I am incapable of giving up cigarettes. I, who own a moral dossier fifty-six years old which shows *no* entries, a dossier in eternal preparation, smudged, handled, yellowed, unused.

Because the *shalt nots* have never troubled me. Negatives suit the passive. That plus the accidental circumstances of my life, of always being surrounded by untemptables, of uncovetable goods and neighbors' wives. Or, just as good for the record, wives who'd probably never have had me, anyway.

Well, where is all this leading? Toward the conclusion that I will kill Nussman from altruism? From selfishness?

Truthfully, Nussman doesn't really offend or threaten me. I've allowed nothing in fifty-six years to offend or threaten me. But, I realize *he should,* and practically speaking, how many opportunities will there be or can there be for me to think this way?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I say "think this way" purposely, for I've been unable to "feel any way" for so long I cannot trust the idea.

Or, is all I've done is to throw my rational competence into doubt? I once kept count, how many, many crises ago, of my rational competence vis-à-vis anguish. Of never cracking. First I kept record of plights, then of periods, then of years . . . no matter. The question is raised and I won't allow it to slip away. Like a last meal, I can't be denied this.

I submit the following. A proof of rational competence made during . . . never mind, let it speak for itself and answer for my logical ability.

Isism and Isn'tism

An apostasy from the question of yes or no, and others?

Since contemporary professional thought has progressed to a state of pause in the pursuit of *essence* and is seemingly content to toy and finger the facts of *existence,* there is time during this warm, lazy, ontological afternoon to consider questions which perplex salesmen, clerks, and schoolgirls. They are:

1) What happens when the irresistible force meets the immovable object?

2) Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

3) Yes or no?

All three propositions have in common the appearance of a conflict of opposites, of choice possibilities. However, examination reveals the first proposition to contain mutually exclusive elements, elements which cannot exist in the company of one another; but, which are necessary, by reference, in defining the other. In other words, what/when one *is* the other *isn't.*

Passing on to the second proposition we again have alternatives poised and the appearance of choice. But, the true choice is not given. Actually, what came first was neither but something that either the chicken or the egg developed from. Here we have a situation of evolving states of *is* vying for primacy.

(In attacking the question of yes or no, it will be done without an object, which eliminates value and casuistry.)

Can we apply the criticism of mutual exclusiveness to yes or no as was done with proposition number one? Could we maintain that either (positive or negative position) is independent of the other? If that were true each would preserve its integrity in the other's company, whereas, we know in fact that simultaneous yes and no becomes *maybe.* Again, one *is* only when the other *isn't.*

Further, can we apply the truth derived from the second proposition; namely, that of primacy of evolving states, which came first, yes or no? Here, prudence suggests retreat, for were it ever solved whether Man's first construction was positive or negative, would not such a trifle ignite the final arbitrary war and reduce the rubble of value to dust?

Ultimately, we can only approach the understanding of opposition—a concept with supportive opposite, reversible figure and ground—as *fractions of experience, numerator over denominator.* This provides us with three seminal inferences:

1) True relationship between language and experience can be found where *integer* concepts exist; a whole concept with no opposite. For example, *time,* having no antonym (certainly not timeless, death, or eternity) but alone encompasses an aspect of experience.

2) MERE NEGATION IS NOT OPPOSITION.

3) The tension between numerator and denominator truly reflects the experience principle of conflict, the basis of genesis, another integer concept (not opposed by destruction, erasure, etc.).

Have we, by way of the last item above, come to prepare for the Dialectic?

No. We have come to remedy the Dialectic. It implies, and we must agree, that all experience occurs between the poles of opposition and not beyond them. It implies conflict and genesis. But, the error of the dialectic is that it employs *parthenogenic* opposites.

Opposition, of necessity, must be *engendered,* some *yin* and *yang* applied, a Mendelian schema prepared for the ensuing *litter* of alternatives. Experience will then no longer be a case of *is* or *isn't* with the single synthesis of *perhaps.* Experience will be as it actually *is* and *isn't*: *isful, isn'tful, isable, isn'table, isless, isn'tless,* etc.

As generations of qualifications increase they will expand the finite boundaries of opposition into infinitude and freedom will at last be possible.

Have I not acquitted myself rationally? But, for myself, what does it mean to the murder I intend? Simply, this little ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

position releases me from the alternatives normally available, namely:

a) to do good (refrain from evil) allows evil to persist;

b) to do evil allows good to exist.

Therefore, the choice between good and evil is merely one of *sequence.*

Enough, enough, too much of reason.

I have one more consideration to deal with before resuming my testimony. I said I was wholly resolved to the act of murder. I said emotionally, also. That is, if the word "emotionally" encompasses this truth . . . a truth I've derived with no *a priori,* no givens, a truth derived from a problem not even given, but taken.

It's taken great cost but now I *know* that guilt is the corpse of love, love murdered, and though one shudders to think the soul a cemetery, it is. The soul is nothing more nor less than a cemetery.

It is, and I, after fifty-six years, am digging my first grave, burying guilt without a coffin of excuse or rationalization but naked, thereby to hasten corruption for I need desperately the fetor of putrefaction . . . which is fear, and who knows, possibly prayer.

How do I know that, now, before my first experience? Easily, because I'm a Jew. That, as anyone knows, accounts for my aptitude for atonement . . . for the pain and now the release from pain, my instinct free sending me heaving and panting to sacrifice, to shrive, to expiate, to forfeit.

Yes, I anticipate and reject the charge that I seek a synthetic martyrdom, manufacturing and justifying my circumstances. I anticipate and reject the charge that I've ignored the common trough of guilt, fasting until now for the *bonne-bouche* Nussman will make. It's simply that I've gone hungry while others are fed to death.

This is possible and this is how it is possible. That such a man as myself is a Jew means something. That there has been in him since childhood an unused loyalty, an unreasonable urge to congregate and, at times, an ache to cheer and applaud someone, something, an agony to abandon himself in service. That this has been denied, stifled in him . . . means everything. It means that he became a lonely old Jew.

Is that comic?

Is it comic that through cowardice he became egregious, suffering, and is it comic that despite cowardice he cannot rid himself of the notion that he will die and be dead alone, alone again, unless he can join the assembled dead by corrupting and putrefying *entirely.*

There, isn't that enough of a motive, enough of a lure? But, do I muddle my case for soul-estrangement with the irrelevancy of being a Jew? Do I? If that need be asked, the whole point is missed.

Because one isn't only born a Jew, one is conscripted into Israel. Drafted into an army, an army that has deserted me, and what can a soldier do who's too timid to inquire where the war is? Make haste, the orders read, into the fight, for love! Stand until death and after, pursue love, capture love though you know it will perish in your custody, as God's did.

But, alone, what could I do? A guerrilla? No.

I spied, poorly, with no hope of effect until Nussman, a Jew renegade. Now, I can act and fall, but no longer alone. I shall have comrades . . . like Jesus, *our* unknown soldier known, hero of the jilted army.

If this is where I forfeit patient consideration for the indulgence the insane receive . . . too bad. Too bad, for this is where a Jew's truth begins. It begins if you will accept the words of another Jew, "The man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conqueror. . . ."

True?

That Jew was Freud and what extremes did he not go to to show how much truer it is if one is the *only* child. A child wooed to and cooed to unceasingly. A child with a Joseph-father, a cab driver afflicted with a prodigy, a man with no taste or heart for a dynasty, siring a warrior who camped in his mother's arms, a sentry in her lap, a picket before her bosom . . . earning at last his commission: Jesus a God and I, I, a dentist!

Ridiculous, isn't it? The identical process . . . a dentist who would at this date . . . no, I have talked away the sympathetic shelter of irony, talked away any attempt at tragedy. As though a boy of twenty having begun a suicide note looks up to find a dozen volumes and fifty-six years later that he's talked too much, talked away death's sig-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nificance . . . as there's only a bit more rotting to be done.

I suppose what kind of creature I am is quite obvious.

I conclude these remarks with the information that I have secured a revolver and I'm confident that I can manage to operate it.

To RESUME my narrative again. I left off at a point of dialogue between Felix and myself which prefaced an examination of sexuality. Soon after this exchange a discussion of sexual pathology followed and Nussman's story of Madame Pfister.

(*I cannot report the exact sequence of discovery, hundreds of allusions, clues, hints, of Nussman's "para-medical" interest,* Ephialtes, the nightmare. *Suffice it to say that it was revealed piece by piece after his recounting the episodes of Madame Pfister, of the medical student in Baltimore, and, finally, of the Lehrer brothers, known to me.*)

Nussman had been practicing in Innsbruck, perforce a non-specialized practice because of his commitment to Helfmann. He was called one morning to attend a Madame Pfister, wife of a senior magistrate. She was young, in her late twenties, childless, and uncommonly beautiful. He found the poor girl bearing the marks of a violent physical encounter. Since her husband refused to have her hospitalized Nussman could do little else except perform first aid treatment and sedate the girl. Nussman assumed that he, unknown to this circle of Innsbruck society, had been called because of the scandalous nature of the woman's condition. This was true, the magistrate though innocent of abusing his wife was extremely sensitive to the disgraceful aspect of the situation. Shortly thereafter, Madame Pfister, the marks of her encounter not yet gone, visited Nussman. Most probably on her husband's direction.

She complained of insomnia and anxiety but did not respond to the doctor's ministrations. Her regular visits became frequent. Finally, she confessed her original ordeal. She admitted, after may false starts, that it was a visitation, an Incubus. But, more than that, she desired it again.

(*Here, I must state again that I shall decline to comment on Helfmann's hypothesis except to note that for a disciple, Nussman, Madame Pfister was a rare prize, perhaps the rarest. Further, Nussman confided to me some time after that summer night, that he himself was in the severest of agonies. For, though he had a subject he had not yet developed a method.*)

So, aside from drugs and many unsuccessful post-hypnotic attempts, Nussman could do nothing for his patient except listen as she relived her horrible ecstasy. Remembering details, condemning her memory for the meager scraps of joy it yielded, yearning, dreading . . . all the while the substance of her obscene adventure was slipping away, and so was her life. Until the end she'd made her body a shrine, cutting herself off from all company except Nussman's, who was allowed to offer drugs . . . and listen.

The details, the use to which her fantasy put her are superfluous to my testimony aside from the obvious remark that it was too much pain and pleasure for her to bear unaided. And, as it concerns the doctor, the questions are: Did he act as he was sworn or cheat his oath with anodynes, forsaking equivocal orthodox psychological treatment in the hope of securing an insight into the dubious hypothesis he supported; and lastly, can he justify his failure to seek consultation?

I judge him guilty.

A postscript to the death of Madame Pfister was a call paid by the magistrate who assured the doctor that he was in no way considered responsible for the poor woman's death. But, since he was party to such distasteful information the doctor could understand that the presence of such information in Innsbruck loomed as a possible compromise toward the magistrate's performance of his duties. And, after all, the doctor was still a young and skillful physician and could easily establish himself elsewhere. In this way began Nussman's dislocation, a dislocation for a long time sustained by European politics and after, by habit.

This story was in essence revealed to me, I repeat, primarily as an anecdote illuminating a discussion of sexual pathology. And, it was after that particular evening that Nussman's personal footnotes were added.

Now, there should be reasons for such confidences. Could they stem from that mutual nonplussed moment at my bedside when he betrayed the presence of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his secret, his being undone by half? Or, was it my unwitting encouragement, like revealing to him the shameful reason for my discontinuation of gas anesthesia? Yes, probably these things contributed but not nearly so much as I suspect something else, something I term, for my own uses, the *sublimated Odyssey instinct.*

By that I refer to an urge, an instinct for adventure which has become intellectualized (and conversationalized) so that now it is manifest by a desire to leap from the common gallery to the lectern and recount the flight. Talk. Talk. Talk. An insatiable need to talk.

But, in the case of Nussman, as time and failure widened the gap, there was only myself. Enough I suppose, wandering in out of the dull weather of my life, a solitary listener, who will applaud the speaker with bullets.

BUT, TO proceed. The second . . . *notable* case Nussman encountered was in Baltimore. About ten years before he arrived here. It involved a young boy, just entering medical school and his parents. I will use only his first name, David, but possess other clues through which he might be traced, if he is still alive.

Nussman had been called to attend the father. I must make clear at the outset that though David was well-formed and extraordinarily gifted his parents were both grotesque examples of the kind of rubbish the human womb can expel. Unfortunately alive. They were both deaf, mute, and palsied. They were mated as these situations are commonly handled through mutual circles of family and friends, the mother from Baltimore and the father from St. Louis, endowed with a modest and secure income and forgotten.

When Nussman was called, the father was in the terminal stage of intercurrent pneumonia; meaning that the poor spastic wretch's twisted posture made normal aeration of the lungs impossible and death swift.

In the two years following, Nussman and David became close friends. Naturally, on the basis of the boy's studies and the doctor's profound knowledge of medicine. And, somewhere in their talks the boy revealed the nature of his torment. That he had been since childhood, in effect, an antenna, translating sound and speech into a petite semaphore; that he had and could not restrain himself since childhood and until the death of his father from making nocturnal expeditions into his parents' room—darkness muting their only vital sense—to observe their palsied love-making; that all his thinking could be and was done aloud even after he learned and came to feel the treasons everyone commits in the company of others while in the privacy of themselves . . . this impossibility to think voicelessly imprisoned David with his parents.

Soon after the death of his father, he revealed, he had his first nightmare. He dreamed he was lying on a surgical table when a gigantic pair of hands appeared and began to remove his senses, his eyes, ears, nose, and tongue. Finally, the hands moved toward his genitals. At this point he awoke to spend the rest of the night recuperating from an agonizing dread, a conviction of absolute paralysis, and a heavy oppression that threatened to stifle him. These, according to Nussman, the classic symptoms of *Ephialtes.*

Months and months went by, the same dream over and over again without variation and increasing in frequency. And, the boy in frantic alarm at the prospect of sleep, haggard and failing at his studies.

In this state is it any wonder though Nussman equivocates that reason would quit a mind denied rest? Nussman answered that the state of psychological knowledge being what it is he was justified in hoping to rebuild David's mind after its inevitable collapse; and, I'm sure, in doing so experiment with the constituents. He hoped for this until he was called, as he usually is, to attend a midnight tragedy.

It appears as though the poor boy, getting no relief from his physician, has tried to solve himself. I, being no expert admittedly, judge that those terrible dream hands were identified by his last shreds of reason as belonging to his parents. But, this is the limit of his rationality . . . instead of the retributive hands of his father he thought them to be his mother's.

His almost continual waking state was by this time probably also governed by the laws of his nightmare. It was learned that he had taken from his laboratory surgical tools and ether, intending in fact to amputate the of-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fending hands. But, instead, he destroyed the hands by blinding himself.

To all this, to my look of horror, Nussman concluded with, "I could not fight such an Oedipus."

The doctor left Baltimore leaving mother and son bound together more tightly than any lovers could hope to be, two together equivalent to one set of sensibilities. He left and wandered until now, here, and the surviving Lehrer brother.

Does it seem that I have . . . painted this episode more vividly than Madame Pfister's? I mean, that my condemnation here is more intense? Does it seem from what is known of me so far that I'm more incensed at the loss of a precious son than of that poor girl? A son through whom I might have. . . .

Perhaps, at times I've suspected myself of elaborating this entire indictment where in reality any incident by itself would be sufficient for . . . what is expected of a normal man. But, I cannot be sure . . . sure enough to dismiss these papers and go straight to my revolver. And, as that is so, I must complete.

To complete the Baltimore . . . inventory, I should note that Felix had, at least, developed a method. He called it *exhaustion of phenomena.* It included such devices as *baffling* the dream message, *confounding* and *misdirecting* it, to ravel and muddle, perplexing and addling it at every turn so as to seal it hermetically. That done, the patient a virtual test-tube, the observer would have the dream field before him uncontaminated by a therapy system. It would be pure, the burden of intelligibility falling away revealing the mechanism. I must remark, anticipating the appendix to these pages, that it was entirely consistent with the Helfmann hypothesis as it satisfied the empiric requirements and disdains the human.

And yet, I cannot leave it entirely like that. I've wondered that, as Nussman tells me and as I've learned, a symptom is a means to suppress motive force and once the analytic situation is established, symptoms do not progress, as a rule. Then, respite is achieved . . . character change achieved . . . under arrested motivation. Nussman's exhaustion technique would, logically, create a more profound and deeper respite . . . oh, bother, I'm beginning to believe all psychology bores one to health. And, besides, it is too late to save Nussman or myself.

As the conclusion of my testimony approaches . . . and the morning does also, I submit that part of which there can be no doubt as to its veracity; of the Lehrer brothers, known to me since childhood.

They, Avrom the elder and Reuben the younger, have always lived down the street in the same apartment they'd occupied with their parents, now long dead. Neither brother had married, going into the family dry goods business after rudimentary schooling. This placid existence was maintained by the not quite middle-aged bachelors—always known as polite, considerate, and retiring neighbors—until five years ago when Avrom committed suicide by hanging, in their apartment.

Afterward, the younger Reuben continued to occupy the same rooms, inheriting along with the Lehrer estate his deceased brother's share of solitude. This he bore with no noticeable change until the last few months when his natural neurasthenic appearance became more marked, about the time when he began visiting Nussman.

Again, I cannot present things in their sequence of discovery but retrospectively constructed. I learned that the brothers had for many years been victims of identical nightmares. They had each seen themselves alone on a vast plain, a sack tied around their necks. They were impelled to walk but each step was made with the greatest of agonies for some living thing slept within the sack. If they woke the beast, its struggle to free itself would throttle them. They walked, each night, and suddenly a mis-step, the beast stirred, woke, and began a violent frenzied thrashing which strangled the dreamer awake. This same dream, shared by two, repeated countless times during the better part of their manhood.

Both men, being even simpler than I imagined, probably kept the secret thinking it signified a terrible shame. Keeping it together until the elder chose what is assumed to be a dream-proof sleep.

Reuben came to Nussman—an attraction of aliens—complaining of incapacitating neurasthenic symptoms: insomnia, a constant lassitude bordering on collapse, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

persistent tinnitus (ringing and buzzing in the ears). In the course of these visits, the nightmare was exposed as well as the fact that Avrom's suicide had suspended its appearance. Poor Reuben, however, could not endure the reprieve purchased by his brother's death, and poorly purchased at that, for he knew the dream would return.

I SUPPOSE at this time I was an accessory, not implicated by Nussman but self-invited. I, too, waited with a fascinated, excited horror while Nussman fatted his subject with tonics, vitamins, and tranquilizers; marking each night as an experiment, whether or not the dream would return.

It did, finally. The night before last.

Yesterday morning, while I was in Felix's apartment for coffee as usual, Reuben burst in a few moments after I'd arrived. He and Nussman merely exchanged looks and abruptly abandoned me in the kitchen.

Letting myself out of the apartment I passed the consulting room and overheard these bits of conversation.

"No . . . it wasn't the same as usual."

"So, in what way was it different?"

A long pause. "I had . . . two bags around my neck. Avrom's also."

"Can you tell the difference?"

"Yes. His is bigger."

I knew it was going to begin again, the exhaustion, the baffling, the confounding . . . and it did, "Which would you want to open first?"

I tried many times yesterday and last night to see Felix. Mustering my strength and courage to convince him not to continue. But, he wouldn't see me, coming to the door and excusing himself because of work! He spoke with no look at all on his face. . . . Oh, I've never understood a word that blue eyes spoke. . . .

These twenty-odd hours without his company have given me time . . . no, I will not pretend that I've come to see my human responsibility. No, not that.

I've had time enough to realize that I'm a nobody living in deepest nowhere, not even sure that I'll kill him for rejecting me . . . or that I know he'll fail again and leave me, anyway. Or succeed and leave me. For truthfully, before he came I knew so little of love and affection, even self-love, so useless to myself . . . could anyone believe that it's only just occurred to me that I've long neglected to examine the handkerchief or toilet I've used . . . can a self mean less?

I've finished. Sylvia's waking up and I have no goodbye for her. She can have Rosenbaum and both Royal Princess Fur Salons . . . if he'll have her without the spice of an obliging cuckold.

If there is any good in what I do, Reuben will be saved, Nussman's papers found—the letters of conspiracy, his comprehensive nightmare, his *Summa* on the Incubus.

The crank must go out now, cross the hall, and wake the crackpot with death.

I will put these papers in my inside pocket. When arrested I shall not speak but offer them instead, if I can manage not to lose them in the excitement.

* * *

(*This speech, the only real evidence I have, given to me by Nussman, was delivered August 28, 1927, before the congress celebrating the opening of the Fachadété Clinic in Bern. The original copy was secured by Nussman and his classmates from the Recording Secretary who struck it from the meeting's minutes on a motion carried unanimously by the assembly. In fact, Felix related, the audience had all except for the students abandoned Doctor Helfmann before he had finished his speech. These students sought but were denied an interview with Helfmann who I'm told, broken in spirit, died that year.*)

COLLEAGUES, students, and guests. When I first communicated to the Committee my desire to speak I was prepared to accept scheduling somewhere in the backwaters of the program. Or, to accept apologies, refusal, and a semi-prominent chair. Instead, finding myself selected to offer the meeting's opening address I feel I must, for the sake of the young faces I see at the rear, briefly explain what may seem as a curious designation of privilege.

It is fitting, as the Committee doubtlessly assumed, that in marking a new high point in our history there should be some reference to the old. That is, myself. And, it is equally fitting that the old themselves recognize and rejoice that their movement can afford —if only to temper rivalry—sentimentality. More so for myself, who authored no antique paper, fashioned no antique method, but simply gestured. A gesture which most

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

appropriately compliments those young faces in the rear of the auditorium, *heresy.*

That is honored, that I declined a significant neuro-surgical stature at a critical time for a psychoanalytic apprenticeship.

Today, I have put myself forward not to expand and publicize, to counter a neglected epitaph, and not to account my recusancy in gain and loss. But to note that the first and most difficult heresy makes the second easier and more imperative, illuminating the third and others which contend among themselves only in irresistibility. That is the nature of heresy.

I HOPE, therefore, my intention is framed. I intend to dwell on and examine the process of conversion. Not, however, as a personal adventure. On the contrary, it has become impossible for me to maintain the illusion of purposely, melodramatically, transferring faith and allegiance. It is on the impersonal aspects I wish to comment, to focus on the forces that select us and we appropriate, in the narrow between free will and determinism, and call our credos.

Therefore, I begin at once to develop my theme, renunciation. First of Müller, Broca, the knife, architectonics, cytoarchitecture, all exchanged for the invisible topography and invisible forces of our movement.

It took quite some time before I questioned, being so satisfied with the seeming difference in mercy between the operating theater and comfortable dialogue surgery. I can say there was not a single misgiving until the first of my patients terminated analysis. Then, I found of all I had renounced I could not renounce my idea of *cure.* True, there was remission of symptoms but not obliteration. The patient was independent of me but yet required and probably always would require the insights, the principles as *medication.* It seemed that their adjusting was as much teaching, an inculcation of duplicity of self and soul. Their dreams were fibs to be found out, their anguish a legacy, and in the biography of cause, effect, and forces, reassurance of the presence of a self was to be given, somehow.

In short, I was a surgeon again. Cutting through, exposing but not extirpating, hoping the cancer would wither and die under the light of my special reason.

It was then that I thought that, perhaps, a concentrated study would eliminate this excess of qualm which I supposed was usually diluted by a more extensive professional experience than I possessed. I began work even hopefully that some day I might stand before a meeting such as today's and present a paper on the *analyzed personality.* A paper which would determine the quality, the aspects of adjustment related to my own personality. Discovering why the self-amity my patients achieved insistently suggested to me that I had *cored* them. And more, to chart all the levels of *vitalism,* even those modifications noted by the patient's family and friends, the changes in general composure, threshold of response, and inventive capacity. Finally, if failing in all this, at least to make the first crude scale to assess the depth of analysis. That was my program.

In pursuing it, however, I declined psychological anecdotal methods and terms in preference for methods and terms which would satisfy empiric procedure. I substituted metaphrases until the reason itself which I was metaphrasing spoke out. Gasping out as it were, a farewell message: I had repudiated it!

Once admitted, it could not be dismissed.

It was left for me to examine my metaphrases and equivalencies. And, it was not left for me to conclude other than that concepts, such as strata of consciousness, far from resisting my method had never actually gained my whole support. And, this perspective revealed to me the obvious contumacy of my metaphrasing.

I had led myself for a while even so far as to believe, for example, that stratification of consciousness was quite the same for my purposes as an emulsion, as it were, of conscious curds in an unconscious whey. This, particularly, was later discerned by myself as a never established commitment to the functioning of philosophical entities as quasi-biological elements governed by the laws of psychological buoyancy, joy, and pain.

At this point, scrutiny and organization of my notes disclosed an alternate and private chiarascuro to express the tissue of consciousness—characterized as able to reflect, continue, and manipulate impression —*in relation to its pathological state.*

Briefly, it indicated that consciousness be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

haved as substance with characteristics such as these. Rather than tiered, it is a diffusion of corpuscles; corpuscles attenuated out of definition and into an *a*conscious medium. These corpuscles have a tendency toward constellation, their density varies and is to precision unascertainable. They are *a priori* activated, though dimensionless, without experience, as shown by the congenitally sense impaired who lack the corresponding sense quality in dreams and experience.

Memory, repression, and anxiety phenomena can be related by analogy as dependent on centrifugal, centripetal forces and entropy. Likewise, dreams analogized to function by the principles of inertia.

This, then, emerged from the study undertaken to alleviate my dissatisfaction with the first of my clinical successes. Myself, no surer, but with an additional debate. Beside the original argument against design, wrangling with the consequences of my metaphrasing.

More explicitly, having abandoned the dictum that the only access too many have to joy is the sexual and in its place substituting a mechanical paradigm, I could not resist the natural ontogeny of my thoughts and pursue truth by analogy to the newest realm of physical investigation, atomics.

Toward this, the epiphany of affinity between the convulsions of sub-atomic matter as demonstrated by the eminent Rutherford and the convulsions of consciousness by the nightmare, decided my course irrevocably. And, ironically enough, was at the same time the limit of my *strict* analogizing.

MY RESEARCH, preparatory to dealing with the nightmare phenomena, extending back into history as it did, put forth the natural conclusion of process, that of syncretization. It was inescapable to conclude other than that the *Ephialtes,* the *Incubus,* the *Alp,* the *Kikimara,* the *Ardat,* the *Langsuior,* the *Ciuateteo,* the *Autu,* all these, the entire index of recorded nightmare figures, have become lodgers in the psychotic house *we* have built. Whereas, before, they were brief and occasional visitors, geographically and culturally particular, now, they can only be found as personal and symbiotical familiars.

A subordinate yet cogent corollary to this is that much of psychosis as it is known can be said, though ruefully, to have been incubated in the nightmare, filtered and expelled from the content of previous sanities by social and educational processes, the gnawing notion suggests itself that the process is potentially reversible.

This brings me to state my respectful opposition to the position and to its distinguished and regrettably absent proponent, Doctor Ernest Jones, and his notable papers, *Der Alptraum* and *Schriften zur angewandten Seelenkunde.* An opposition so keenly held by myself that I omit the confutation courtesy of assigning to his works the lesser value of "necessity" while I propose the "sufficiency."

The doctor finds, once more, in the nightmare another extension of the primordial conflict over incest while neglecting the prime aspect of the manifestation, a height and depth of fear incomparable to any other experience of value conflict. Fear, it seems, is considered simply as a texture to experience, a coloring and consequence to a disturbed sexual mechanism.

For myself, I totally resign from this view. I cannot choose sexuality as a guide only up to the *frontier* of the psychotic, while fear, the cosmopolitan, has a passport.

Fear, I submit, has for too long been easily disposed of in the bin of symptomatology while at the same time it is what we term adjustment and sanity as concern with common fear systems and neurosis and insanity by indifference to these or response to an exotic collection. Fear, then, is accepted as the denominator of sanity but no more than that. Its illumination of the basic tissue of consciousness—that which is neither sane nor insane, that which is *a*sane, unafraid but capable of reflecting, continuing, and manipulating the impression of fear—this is ignored.

Now, instead of proceeding directly to a definition of fear and to other conclusions of mine I would prefer to take an oblique path and introduce questions, albeit seemingly naive, asked of me by a prominent young writer I have in analysis. He asked after reading much of the clinical material now in popular circulation if I could explain why the introductory portions of these reports satisfied him aesthetically and emotionally more than the concluding which dealt with successful termination?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Secondly, it seemed to him that the incidence of psychic upset as explained on the basis of individual constitution and perception was meaningful only as it implied a new Calvinism. In this vein he was interested in characters he was developing for a satire in which he intended bringing de Sade's "Justine" up to date with the ingenious twist that his heroes were to be male midgets. One evil and unscrupulous like Juliet and the other noble and moral like Justine, but both extremely ugly. These freaks were to contend with all institutions and aspects of contemporary society. At that time he was considering a psychoanalytical encounter.

MY RESPONSE to the first question was to suggest that he, as an artist, responded to the conflict presented by the patient as a formal hero's dilemma—involving love, hate, and ethical commitments —abstracting a moral predicament and being disturbed by the application of naturalistic values by and through analysis. He was, in effect, responding to the conclusions as though he'd respond to bad art, art for example as resolved by deus ex machina.

As for the second question, I accepted his simile of a new Calvinism, but did not encourage him to apply it so simply to his characters. Especially, when he revealed his intention to have the evil midget reform when he realized he had been victimized by his grotesque appearance into becoming a diabolical agent; and the moral brother turn to evil when he came to understand that he had been sublimating his passions and their fulfillment.

Actually, through our continued conversations I came to realize that the answer I'd proposed for the first question, in abstract, was the solution to the problems with his characters. Namely, that both were suffering from an interference of *continuing* values toward resolution which is not solved by substituting alternate values.

On this basis the patient himself understood his heroes by introducing the concept of *dissonance* between value and its vehicle. His midgets were unfortunate *continuators* or *resonators* seeking out the analyst for *resolution,* but not in terms of values available. Rather seeking release from the *process of continuation.*

Thus, I was brought to the most profound impasse in my researches, ironically, by hypothetical patients. Patients who sought aid in the most fundamental sense, *release from process.*

I had to grapple with the understanding of the basic myth and fiction of existence. Of the never verified and objectified mystery of material phase generalized into immaterial sequence. I was forced to examine the basic problem of material and immaterial, constructions of the mind and terms by which it is constructed, one or the other or dually.

For this I have developed the following dispositions. They are wholly arbitrary and I realize seemingly cryptic, what can be called a syllogism of paradoxes. They are put forth to inspire new reflections on obsolete, obstructive conceptions. When considered, in concert, they are deeply felt not to be far removed from our parochial interests.

The concepts of material and immaterial are subordinate functions of Man's affinity for design. His silhouette is kinesthesized by that which is NOT self between and beyond that which is also NOT self.

The concepts of material and immaterial are insupportable individually or in combination. For example, given the concept of infinite space and infinite matter, that space is more infinite insists itself. For, what is meant by infinite matter refers to distribution. An equal infinitude of matter would displace space.

Matter characterized by extension is in conflict with space characterized as unsubstantial. So much so that to say matter abhors space is necessary. Extension is as much the nature of matter as the purpose, it being a self-limiting property that prevents more than one body occupying the same point in the ultimately accommodating unsubstantial.

The Mind, though rooted in the material, adventures in the immaterial. Therefore, its nature must encompass the qualities of both. UNSUBSTANTIAL EXTENSION, such as a cast shadow. The problem concerning the science of the Mind, modifying and controlling, will require a new empiricism for shadows, the laws of which are available even to children: Mimicry and Parody.

From this, I propose in all earnestness, that we consider as a model of the 20th

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Century Mind of Man, a shadow, embodying as it does extension and unsubstantiality, claiming equal parts of reality and illusion, a perfect methodological paradigm, as impure as experience itself and most importantly, capable of supporting design.

Its laws, as I've stated, are Mimicry and Parody and these can only be suspended by the torch of materialism raised overhead to a height—guaranteed impossible by Planck and Heisenberg and their exposure of mathematic's limits—that would drive man's shadow beneath his feet. It offers us a principle of more durable promise and less degrading consequences than the corroded Oedipus, Ego, and Id.

With perhaps less development than is necessary, I submit that the mind of man is a shadow cast before his birth, to which he must fix himself. And, since surety of whether his action will be mimicked or parodied is absent—the condition of fear—necessarily our concern should be focused on the figure rather than the reflection where alteration is unthinkable. Therefore, by modifying the posture of man, taking advantage of the infinite permutations of mimicry and parody, the mind of man can be cast to offer no threat to its bearer. In plain words, the distorted figure can cast a perfect shadow.

By distortion, in plainer words, I mean the renovation of the content of sanity as known.

The casting off of archaic forms as the arts have anticipated. The casting off of all resolutions from the popular "happily ever after" and "just deserts" to departure from key and tone relationships in music, rationality in literature, and pictorial sense in painting.

All this just as we have attacked moral symmetry by struggling against guilt.

That, is the direction of the future and we must follow willingly, cautiously, and hopefully, mindful of the gamble that if design is obliterated, continuation toward resolution will abate.

Beyond that, waiting lucidly is the essential—at last vulnerable—paradox of man, to solve the drive for resolved limits which itself constitutes a threat to his extension and causes the basic human anxiety and palliative religion.

To conclude, there is in the thoughts placed before you latitude for the obvious satire that Helfmann's theoretical man is afraid of his own shadow. That I cannot ignore and, sincerely, I would not care if at least the satirist would first consider the excruciatingly complete solipsism of a shadow imprisoned in a darkened room.

That is my evocation of the nightmare and psychosis.

I submit it to the wisdom of my colleagues and to the imagination of the industry, and most importantly, to the courage of students.—Dr. Zelig Helfmann

Bern, Switzerland
August 28, 1927

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Jewish Liberalism in the Coming Decade	Werner Cohn
My 1950's	Dennis H. Wrong
Wilhelm Reich—A Revaluation	Philip Rieff
Organization in Contemporary Judaism	Amitai Etzioni
Political Man in Our Time	R. A. Nisbet
Two Years of de Gaulle	Ray Alan

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SAUL GOODMAN

SIMON DUBNOW—A REVALUATION

THERE is a widespread notion in American Jewish thought that the philosophies and ideologies of Jewish existence which developed in East Europe toward the end of the 19th century have become irrelevant and obsolete. These ideologies, it is said, were born, flourished, and died together with the Jewish community that produced them. In particular, the various brands of Jewish secularism and nationalism have either been forgotten or ignored, perhaps because the exponents of a religious point of view have come to dominate the discussion of Jewishness and the problem of Jewish survival. Yet it may be worthwhile, as the centennial of the birth of Simon Dubnow (1860–1941) draws to a close, to take a fresh look at the philosophy of Jewish existence promulgated by this, the greatest, advocate of Diaspora nationalism. Dubnow's basic ideas—contrary to any general impression—are very much in tune with the realities of Jewish life in America, and they may offer us, particularly the secular and intellectual segment of the American Jewish community, some help in confronting the dilemma of living as an integrated minority within the general majority culture.

SAUL GOODMAN, a new contributor, is director of the Sholem Aleichem Folk Institute and on the faculty of the Jewish Teachers Seminary, from which he received a degree. He was also educated at Boston University, Harvard, and the New School. His articles and studies on Jewish history and the Jewish community have appeared widely in both Yiddish and English journals.

Simon Dubnow was born in White Russia on September 10, 1860, the last in a line of rabbis and scholars. He received a traditional Jewish education, but in his early youth became absorbed in the literature of the Haskalah as well as in general European culture. Like many of his contemporaries, the young Dubnow stood upon a platform of assimilation for the Russian Jews according to the Western European (or German) model, but the wave of pogroms that swept over the Jews in the wake of the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881 smashed all the hopes they had placed in emancipation and Russification. The deep ideological crisis that shook the Russian Jewish intelligentsia in this period led to a revision of views and the eventual flowering of new positions on the question of Jewish survival. In Dubnow's case, the trauma of the 80's provoked him into beginning a lifelong study of Jewish history which resulted in a three-volume *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland,* a monumental ten-volume *World History of the Jewish People,* a three-volume study of Hasidism, and a systematic philosophy of Jewish existence which was developed in a series of "Letters on Old and New Judaism."*

* Dubnow's books were originally written in Russian, Hebrew, or Yiddish. Available in English are the 3-volume *History* (Jewish Publication Society, 1920, tr. from the Russian by Israel Friedlander) and the "Letters" (in *Nationalism and History,* JPS, 1958). The *World History* has been translated into German, Hebrew, and Spanish as well as Yiddish; Dubnow added an epilogue on the events of 1914–1938 to the Yiddish edition.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dubnow was the pioneer historian of the East European Jewish community—a community almost completely overlooked by the other great Jewish historians of the 19th century (Jost, Geiger, and Graetz). Apart from that, however, Dubnow was also the first to apply the methods of the "New History" (in America espoused by James Harvey Robinson, Charles Beard, and Carl Becker) to the writing of Jewish history. Whereas Graetz, in the tradition of heroic historiography, primarily concentrated on *Geistes* and *Leidensgeschichte* (intellectual developments and martyrology), Dubnow stressed cultural, social, and economic factors. The hero of his *World History* is not the Martyr or the Book, but the Jewish people (which has "at all times and in all countries . . . been the subject, the creator of its own history, not only in the intellectual sphere, but also in the general sphere of its social life"), and the theme of Dubnow's work is the eternal struggle of this people for survival as an "autonomous" entity. The *World History,* moreover, was the first such work written from a secular, liberal point of view and therefore represents the beginning of the modern attempt to make sense of Jewish history without recourse to theology or metaphysical absolutes.

From 1890 until 1903—the most productive years of his long life—Dubnow lived in Odessa, where he associated with such Jewish luminaries as Mendele, Ahad Ha-am, Simon Frug, Sholem Aleichem, and Bialik. It was in Odessa that the "National Committee"—whose main purpose was to fight assimilation among the Russian Jewish intelligentsia and of which Dubnow became chairman—was founded.

DUBNOW'S philosophy of Jewish existence grew directly out of his historical studies and what he had to say about the problem of Jewish survival was shaped by his evolutionist bias as a historian. There were, he believed, three stages in the growth of nationality—race, territory (which involved political sovereignty), and culture. The progress of a people could be measured by the degree to which it depended for survival on each of these elements. Thus, a people held together mainly by race was at the lowest stage of national development; a people held together mainly by territory was at the intermediate stage; and a people held together by culture—like the Jews of the Diaspora—was "the very archetype of a nation, a nation in the purest and loftiest sense." In the ancient victory of the Pharisees over the Sadducees, Dubnow saw the triumph of the principle of spiritual and cultural nationalism over the principle of political and military nationalism—from which he concluded that the Jewish nation was essentially defined by spirit rather than territory even before it was driven into exile and scattered over the face of the earth.

By spirit Dubnow did not mean religion alone; his conception of the spiritual included attitudes, values, and folkways. Thus he refused to grant that religion was responsible for the survival of the Jews in the Diaspora. What had kept them together, he believed, was a collective will to live—a will nourished by a common historical destiny: "We are welded together by our glorious past. We are encircled by a mighty chain of similar historical impressions suffered by our ancestors, century after century pressing in upon the Jewish soul and leaving behind a substantial deposit. . . . The Jewish national idea is based chiefly upon the historical consciousness." This collective will to live expressed itself concretely in the creation of an "autonomous" community which was separated from the general community by the spiritual "fences" of religion, ethics, and folkways; in East Europe, Jews were even able to achieve self-government through the Kehillah. For Jews to surrender their autonomous existence—that is, to assimilate—would be tantamount to destroying the unique and therefore precious values which Dub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

now—like many other 19th-century thinkers—believed to inhere not only in the Jewish nation but in any highly developed national collectivity.

In espousing the idea of the nation as the source of creativity, Dubnow did not ignore the existence of aggressive nationalism; indeed, he often laid stress on the distinction between the several varieties of nationalism. However, there was obviously no danger of Jewish Diaspora nationalism becoming aggressive, and in any case it was derived from and justified by the basic principles of social ethics as proclaimed by the Prophets. For "the descendants of the Prophets it is fitting to maintain in its purity that national idea which in prophecy was blended with the grandiose visions of universal brotherhood."

In common with all the other great 19th-century historians, Dubnow freely applied the central currents of contemporary thought to the writing of history. From Comte and Spencer he learned to think of history as moving progressively along a line of inevitable evolutionary development (though being a student of *Jewish* history, he was bound to become more cautious in his optimism than his mentors). From Ernest Renan he adopted the idea of nationality as determined by subjective will and national awareness rather than the external characteristics of state, territory, and language. And finally, from Hegel he borrowed the dialectic (while taking care to distinguish his "naturalistic" use of the evolutionary triad of thesis-antithesis-synthesis from Hegel's). In Dubnow's scheme of Jewish historical development, the thesis is represented by the Orthodox Jewish masses, the antithesis by the assimilationists, and the synthesis by the new Jewish intelligentsia—presumably men like himself and Ahad Ha-am—who harmoniously combined ancestral and European culture.

This intelligentsia, he believed, would emerge as the guiding class of Jewry in the 20th century and would create a new mode of autonomous Jewish life. Just as Jewish life once revolved around the synagogue, so in the 20th century it would be centered in an all-embracing secular community, democratically organized and responsible for educational, religious, and social functions. Every Jew (except one who had converted to another religion) would be a member of this Kehillah.*

On the question of language, Dubnow was a pluralist favoring the vernacular Yiddish as well as Hebrew and Russian. He encouraged the then emerging Yiddish literature and believed that Yiddish, Hebrew, and Russian should be the instruments of the autonomous Jewish Kehillah. There was no hope, he thought, of reviving Hebrew as a living tongue in the Diaspora. At the same time, however, he considered that Chaim Zhitlowsky—the exponent of Yiddishism—had overrated the nationalizing value of Yiddish. In his polemics against Zhitlowsky, he asked: "About one-third of the Jewish people does not speak Yiddish today and several generations later another third may disregard it (especially in America); should we abandon them to complete assimilation? History shows us that had the Jewish people rested only on the foundation of language, no trace of it would have remained by now. . . ."

The main question raised by Dubnow's position, of course, was whether autonomy could be achieved by Jews living in countries that they themselves did not dominate politically. What guarantee was there that the "host nation" would grant self-government? Would not an independ-

* Though Dubnow refused to grant the primacy of Judaism (as sheer religion) in Jewish culture, he also felt that conversion to any other faith destroyed Jewish nationality. This is perfectly consistent with his view that the Jewish religion is an important element in the Jewish heritage. On the other hand, he was inconsistent in maintaining that a Jew could not become a member of another nationality except through mingling of blood (marriage) over the course of several generations. Here Dubnow slipped into thinking of nationality as biological, perhaps because he was convinced of the folly of assimilationism for the individual Jew.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ent state offer better opportunities for creative survival? To this question Dubnow answered that, like it or not, the Diaspora was a permanent feature of Jewish life. He rejected the grandiose dreams of Theodor Herzl, who spoke of an "Ingathering of the Exiles," and moreover differed with political Zionism in its belief that Jewish life must be "normalized" in accordance with the pattern of other nations. For Dubnow the Jews were a *supranormal* rather than an "abnormal" people, and he tended therefore to regard the upsurge of "aggressive nationalism" with disfavor—as a regression to a lower stage of historical development.

The political Zionists, however, were not the only group who based their program on a thoroughly pessimistic attitude toward the possibilities of a decent Jewish life in the Diaspora. While themselves accepting the Diaspora as inevitable and permanent, the cultural Zionists—led by Dubnow's friend Ahad Ha-am—were also convinced that the fallacy of Dubnowism was to suppose that the Jews could ever gain "national" rights within the countries of the Diaspora. In Ahad Ha-am's view, moreover, even if such rights were achieved, this would still not be enough in a secularized age to assure Jewish cultural continuity. The meaningful survival of Jewish communities throughout the world depended on the existence of a Jewish center in Palestine where a culture true to the national ethos could be developed, both for its own sake and for the sake of providing inspiration and nourishment to the Diaspora. Dubnow did not oppose the idea of a cultural center in Palestine, and he agreed that Palestine could become "a model nursery of pure national culture . . . whose quality will be more authentically Jewish than Diaspora culture." There is, then, no fundamental divergence between the theories of Ahad Ha-am and Dubnow. Indeed, my impression is that the thinking of the American Jewish community today can be characterized as a synthesis of the philosophies fashioned by these two "obsolete" East Europeans. They differ rather in points of emphasis and nuance, as one can see from the following remarks Dubnow made shortly before the First World War: "The difference between the land of Israel and the Diaspora will be qualitative and quantitative; in Palestine there will be a none too numerous people that will be distinguished by a richer and more complete national culture while the Diaspora will be weaker, but will make up in quantity for what it lacks in quality. The reciprocal influence of the two centers will create the mean for the national development of Judaism."

TO ASSERT the relevance of Dubnow to Jewish life in America today it is not necessary to overlook his inconsistencies and the ephemeral character of certain aspects of his philosophy. Much of his thinking was conditioned by 19th-century assumptions that no longer seem tenable —the faith in inevitable progress, the belief in evolutionary development, and the mystique of nationality. Moreover, some of his key predictions have turned out to be false. The Jewish intelligentsia of Western Europe has, if anything, moved toward the "antithesis" of assimilationism rather than toward the "synthesis" of Jewish and general culture. Nor is the kind of autonomy he advocated for East Europe either possible or desirable in this country. Here the organized Jewish community is made up of numerous voluntary associations which have no legal status and desire none (some do not even desire unification into a single body). The Jews in America are not a separate nationality, in the East European connotation; they are a religious or an ethnic group among many other such groups, and their nationality is unambiguously American.

In spite of all this, however, it can still be argued that autonomism—suitably modified by present conditions—is actually a potent force and a prevailing mode of Jewish group life in the United

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

States. Basically what we have here in the many religious, philanthropic, educational, cultural, social, and civic Jewish organizations is a form of *cultural* self-government. It is voluntary, rather than legally recognized; decentralized and bureaucratically dominated, rather than unified and democratically elected—but it is self-government nevertheless. Dubnow himself understood that communal autonomy must be sought "in a form that is appropriate to the conditions of the times," and he even recognized that the particular form he advocated for Russia would be unsuitable to America.

Thus, Diaspora nationalism requires modifications and revisions in the America of 1960. But so do all the other traditional Jewish ideologies, including political Zionism. Let me cite one illustration. A central doctrine in Ahad Ha-am's philosophy was that in Palestine the Jewish people would create a *genuine* Jewish culture, in the true spirit of the ancient Prophets, which would act as a bulwark against assimilation within the Diaspora. In the light of our present experience, how unshakable does this idea seem? Could a true Jewish culture in Israel really counteract the tendency toward assimilation among American Jews, which is itself an aspect of the leveling of group differences in America? And what would national distinctiveness mean, in the end, for a small people living in its own land? Indeed, the history of the ancient Israelites testifies that a small people is always in danger of being swallowed up culturally by the dominant tendencies of the surrounding world, just as today the youth of Israel finds itself, in part, attracted to the idea of Levantinization. Even such an extreme opponent of Diaspora nationalism as David Ben Gurion recently admitted the possibility that Israeli society might eventually be shaped in the image of the surrounding nations.

What then was Dubnow's contribution to the problem of strategies for Jewish survival, and what can we learn from him today? First of all, in secularizing the idea of Jewishness, and in giving meaning to Jewish history without benefit of theology, he provided a rationale—and one that remains convincing, in spite of some inconsistencies—for the free-thinking Jew's impulse to remain Jewish and to transmit the heritage of Jewishness to future generations. Those who assert that a creative Jewish culture is impossible without a firm religious commitment on the part of the Jewish community might reflect on Dubnow's analysis of how the Jews maintained their spiritual character in various periods of history. "If we understand the law of our survival," he said, "and we know the conditions on which it depends, then the faith in our continuity will be tied to action, to practical commandments, although not those derived from the Shulchan Aruch. The principles of the national commandments are known: perennial struggle for communal autonomy—in a form that is appropriate to the conditions of the time; a struggle for national education at home and in schools established for this purpose; education in the ancient national language, and the vernacular languages developed in the Diaspora; a struggle for the cultivation of all basic national possessions and their adaptation to universal culture. . . ."

Is it, however, at all likely that American Jews will remain committed to Jewishness in a broad cultural sense? My own feeling is that the signs point in this direction. Surely the much heralded religious revival of recent years has less to do with religion (as many observers agree) than with cultural identification. If we adapt Dubnow's conception of the three national types to the American Jewish community, we might say that it has passed through the first two stages of Americanization and integration and is now entering into the third stage—the search for its ancestral roots and its authentic "self." And in this search, Dubnow deserves to be considered one of the best and most helpful guides.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG

TRUTH: UPPER, MIDDLE & LOWER

TRUTH surely is complex; but there is one dimension of truth that is especially useful in distinguishing among the different approaches to conviction that occur most frequently at different social class levels. This is the dimension that we sometimes call "subjective-objective"; it has to do with whether truth is thought to be primarily an aspect of inner experience, unique and essentially incommunicable; or whether it is thought rather to lie in consensus, and to consist primarily of what all honest and technically qualified observers can agree on.

Common sense tells us, to be sure, that no one can hope to live through the day unless he accepts both kinds of truth as valid. Yet, it makes a profound difference to the total personality and to the meaning one finds in life itself whether the subjective or the objective approach to the world predominates; or whether, to speak in more fundamental terms, one's sense of who one is in relation to the rest of the universe is felt to depend ultimately on one's inner qualities, or on one's dexterity and precision in responding to observable features of the environment.

Of course, we must all rely on both; and with the exception of a small number —these, at least, do not constitute a group —of schizophrenics, we all do. But most people find that one approach—the subjective or the objective—tends rather consistently to make them feel calmer, stronger, and better defined; while the other tends to make them feel more anxious and vulnerable. Pressed by circumstances, any of us might go against his inclination; but it is difficult to imagine Baudelaire or Beckett serving as Chairman of a Committee on Political Arrangements; or Dale Carnegie in solitary confinement scratching a poetic masterpiece into the walls of his cell. Each of us develops a pretty stable tendency to see the truth primarily as internal and subjective —though meaningful, of course, only in relation to external realities; or as primarily empirical and verifiable—though subject, of course, to much mutability and bias.

Generally speaking, the subjective approach appears to be more congenial to and commonly found among members of the extreme social classes—both upper and lower—while objectivity is more frequently the posture congenial to members of the middle classes. It should astonish no one to find greater similarity between upper- and lower-class individuals in this respect than between either of them and middle-class individuals. This is no novel insight; carried to extremes it constitutes the familiar D. H. Lawrence postulate in literature, in which the rich and mighty hold the poor to be somewhat more spontaneous, more tender, and more real than the legions of mid-

EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG is assistant professor of education and social science at Brooklyn College and the author of *The Vanishing Adolescent* (1959). This is his first contribution to COMMENTARY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dling functionaries who are engulfing them. This point of view, perhaps best illustrated in contemporary life by the Ginsberg howl and the truculent assumption that one cannot read poetry, let alone write it, in a Brooks Brothers suit, is often applied very sentimentally. Like all sentimentality it can lead to incredible brutality; as in the infatuation of many Germans of high status with the sleek, violent, proletarian irrationality—as they saw it—of early Nazism. But there is a core of truth in this perception, nevertheless.

Take, for example, attitudes toward alcohol. Physiologically one of the most harmless of drugs, it owes its appeal to its power to weaken and depress the objective—that is, the critical, the rational, the judging and calculating—components of mental life, giving much freer scope to the subjective. The emotions alcohol releases may not be pleasant or comely; the behavior to which they lead may be seriously antisocial. But people who like to drink like it because it makes *their* feelings seem more important to them, in comparison to the rest of reality. For the moment, they don't mind doing what they really feel like doing; or they mind it less. They are less cautious. Fine discrimination, motor coordination—logical acuity—such powers as these are impaired. On the other hand, flashes of wisdom and insight—even perceptions of reality previously blocked by anxiety—which the sober individual would never permit himself may break through to him while he is drunk.

In upper class and in lower class, people may take alcohol or leave it. It is generally regarded as an amenity both by gentlemen who wish to indulge themselves euphorically at dinner after a day they are rather proud of, and by those who, in their destitution, must try to sleep on a subway platform and see no profit in being needlessly aware of their condition. A minority dislike alcohol and avoid it; it floods them with feelings they find uncomfortable; or it blunts perceptions that they would rather use to make their own poetry fresh—these are the heroes who enjoy taking reality straight. But people in lower class and in upper class are very unlikely to *disapprove* of drinking or to regard it as, of itself, a problem. The unguarded moment, the missed opportunity, the danger of being a public spectacle, the future sacrificed to momentary pleasure—these are not what upper- and lower-class people fear.

Middle-class people do. For them, there is little *veritas* in *vino*. Their kind of truth is something to be stalked, captured, and appraised. Their churches condemn rum from the pulpit at lower levels, or accept alcoholism as a problem for group therapy and rehabilitation at slightly higher ones. They mean no insult to the Christ in taking Holy Communion from sanitary thimble-cups of grape juice; this is their way of assuring him that they are worthy of his help, because they always keep their eye on the ball. By keeping it there they reach higher status and, somewhat ironically, discover drinking among the status symbols they are teaching themselves to use; they find comfort in the slight loosening of constraint they gain from scotch or bourbon—once they are reasonably sure which drink is "in." But they know better than to lose control; if they nevertheless do, their most effective defense against guilt is to push their drunkenness over into the empirical sphere by regarding it as a symptom to be treated from a quasi-medical viewpoint.

EMPIRICISM—indeed, science itself—is essentially middle class. As such, it has certainly a very long history; Adam and Eve were the first experimental scientists. Their results, which, true to the tradition they were about to found, they immediately published and placed in the public domain, were so startling as to divert attention from the novelty of the process by which they had obtained them. Yet it was the process, rather than their findings, to which God objected. He had hoped to people Eden with a calmer and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more inward race; able to take itself and its place in the world for granted. Finding himself faced instead with an anxious and ambitious Jewish couple who believed that the clue to themselves lay in their relationship to the environment, he was obliged to create downward mobility, which has remained ever since the true anathema of the middle classes.

God having set his countenance against it, science did not really flourish or take on the institutional form that has become familiar until the Reformation, at which time he apparently consented to a number of alternative administrative arrangements. All of them had in common the consequence of opening the social order and turning man loose within it to rise or fall according to his wit and his conscience. Not all at once, of course; and certainly not equally. But this was the fundamental issue. One may approach the opening social order first as the rise of Protestantism, making each man his own priest, responsible for his own understanding of the Scriptures, encouraged and even obliged to master the skills—from literacy to accounting—that would make him master of the earthly destiny through which God might reveal that he had pleased him. One may approach it as the rise of capitalism, severing the connections between wealth and the time, place, and personal relationships in which it had been created; making wealth available elsewhere and at another time, when it might be more efficiently employed by better businessmen. One may approach it as the rise of the national state: that guarantor of contracts and protector of commerce and property, the codifier and registrar of the impersonal agreements on which earthly expectations depend. Or one may approach it as the rise of the natural sciences, providing the method and the attitude through which one could work the natural world over with the confidence that one could learn how it operated and how to operate it, and predict with increasing accuracy what the results would be and make them increasingly the results that were wanted.

IT WOULD BE FRUITLESS to speculate as to which of these components of the 16th-century re-orientation came first; but the growth of science is surely inconceivable apart from the simultaneous rise of a middle class able to profit by progress and of fiscal and governmental institutions able to insure the material future well enough to encourage investment. To a landed gentry or aristocracy, more effective mastery of the external world offered little promise of a better life, at least until other peoples' progress began to make it a military necessity. They were more likely to see it as a threat, and not only to their vested interests. The whole idea must have seemed uncouth and intrusive, a violation of nature both through manipulation and, more subtly, by altering completely what was held to be important about the natural.

Of course, many upper-class individuals were interested in science and favored its development; in 16th- and 17th-century England science was largely a rich man's toy. The Royal Society was founded by Charles the Second; its first presidents were Wren and Newton. But science has always been costly in equipment and education; and the point was that it *was* a toy, whose source of wonder and delight lay in its very objectivity; its intrusiveness and outwardness and detachment. Francis Bacon, dying of pneumonia contracted while trying to freeze a chicken in a snowbank, is not a proper precursor of either Clarence Birdseye or modern cryoscopy. For the 17th-century intellectual, to look at the world he had always taken for granted through a telescope or a microscope was a novelty and a joy. But he could hardly have realized that he was participating as well in the beginning of an ethical and epistemological revolution; that the kind of truth whose novelty delighted him would quickly come to be regarded as truer than other kinds be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cause it led to a profitable mastery of the environment and hence to a competitive advantage in life and ultimately to lifemanship as a technical specialty. Machiavelli so shocked the ruling Medici—though this was not easy—by treating the dynamics of government with scientific detachment that they placed him permanently on the Index Medicus and his name has ever since been, quite erroneously, taken as a synonym for political chicanery. Offense, however, was the furthest thing from his intention; he sincerely respected empirically effective political technique and was interested in the principles on which it might be based. Machiavelli was, quite simply, a professional political scientist before the social role existed. The Medici couldn't take him; capable of extremes of roguery, they were yet incapable of coolly plotting a course from general principles.

THE MOST SALIENT CHARACTERISTIC of the modern world, in contrast to that of four or five hundred years ago, is the range of activities and relationships that *are* now carried on by coolly plotting a course from general principles—empirical principles, that is, not ethical or doctrinal principles. Only this kind of approach could make a world efficient enough in a productive sense to begin to support its present and growing population. But the change has of itself done much to bring about a social and even a political revolution. The rise of empiricism, that is, has led to and has required a complete revision in the concept of authority. This is not a question of power and status, or of the kind of person who achieves it—the familiar spiral that has led from the gentleman or nobleman through the captain of industry to the executive. It is a question rather of authority in the sense of confidence and legitimation; of what we put ourselves through before we can feel reasonably sure of ourselves and of what we are doing.

The essence of scientific truth is that it is as general as possible. The test of it is that it works and works the same way no matter who is looking at it, assuming a certain high minimum of intelligence and technical competence. It is important that smallpox vaccination work with all kinds of people, including those who do not believe in it and whose moral convictions are violated by it. It is important that those whose vested interests, economic or characterological, lead them to deny a newly found scientific truth, be subject *in culture* to the discipline of a method which *tends*, at least, to make their biases ineffective. We have this, and we ought not to underestimate its value. The integrity, or even the intellectual honesty, of cigarette manufacturers does not matter much because science has the manufacturers by the short leaves. In our culture, there is no really effective answer to a clear, classical, conventional demonstration that an empirical relationship exists. The industry has been reduced to trying to fight science with other science; that is to hiring scientists to prove scientifically that there is no demonstrable relationship between cigarette smoking and cancer. This is probably impossible to do effectively, because scientific integrity, in the sense of not falsifying data or suppressing them or drawing false inferences from them, is one of the kinds we have left. Scientists are honest about science, less out of a sense of principle than a sense of role. The ones who are willing to shave a few points don't, usually, have enough status to do their seducers any good.

The elders of an Indian village opposing modern methods of hygiene, or even the British peasant of fifty years ago opposing modern methods of agriculture, did not have to deal with this problem. It is not very threatening to be proved wrong unless your culture has indoctrinated you with respect for scientific proof. Only after other traditional sources of authority have abdicated in favor of empirical validation need conservatives claim to be *right*. They can claim rather that the meaning of life,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as they have come to understand it, is more important to them than being right. The South, till the press of recent events exacerbated old fears, could generally manage to accept anthropology; a reasonably secure Southerner will admit very cheerfully that there are no grounds whatever for regarding Negroes as inferior to white people. It costs him nothing to do so, since he has never regarded his racial attitudes as conclusions from data.

THE SHIFT TOWARD empirical dominance, then, has been a social and political as well as a technological and epistemological shift. It has not only yielded —more abundantly than could possibly have been anticipated—the promised technical mastery of the environment. It has led into positions of mastery those who have most effectively committed themselves to an empirical posture toward all experience—who have either silenced their inner voice or taught it, when a choice must be made, to defer to the facts and to the kind of reality which can be treated factually. "How many divisions has he got?" Stalin asked of the Pope, and we are shocked—not at his contempt for moral authority, but at his administrative naivety. This is the sort of mistake a power politician just doesn't make.

It is not so much that the shift to empirical dominance has made conditions especially propitious politically for those untroubled by inner doubts and undistracted by the meaning of their own experience. This has always been true, for power is always largely an empirical problem. What is more significant is that the authoritative roles and statuses have come to be defined in empirical terms and to arouse empirical expectations. The bad guy, we really feel, is the man who rocks the boat. Such people, under any system, are regarded as irritating and dangerous; what seems to me new is our conviction that they are *out of role,* sick, egocentric. When they do win—rare as this is—it is usually because their superordinates, righteous in their empiricism, simply could not take them seriously at all.

They don't win, though, very often; and when they do, they have perhaps a certain impact on the structure in which they are operating, but usually none on the assumptions on which it rests. Their victory is attributed to their bosses having underestimated their empirical competence; they were better operators than they got credit for. They made a shrewder estimate than expected of their chances for victory. That they may have had to behave as they did for internal reasons, quite apart from the probability that they might influence the outer world effectively, is no longer really believed.

Much that we call anti-intellectualism in the modern world is really anti-subjectivism. Nobody seems disgruntled about the intellectual activities of engineers, or physicians, or scientists as long as they do not involve themselves in the value-consequences of their work. What is feared and avoided is really the intellectual activity of humanists, who still depend to some extent on internal validation to give them confidence in what they say. Poets, composers, novelists—essayists, perhaps, even more since they are invading a field now thought to belong properly to the empiricists—find themselves trapped in a noose-like circularity. Nobody can listen to them until they demonstrate their empirical *kashrut* by becoming successful; and since of course they cannot become successful until people listen to them, they depend to a large degree, I am afraid, on blind luck to even get started.

If nothing succeeds like success, then the successful become the only power elite; and the empirical knowledge that brings success drives all other knowledge out of the market. *Noblesse,* certainly, cannot *oblige* if the noble are too poor to meet their obligations and have too little status to influence anybody else to meet theirs. Yet, all this has a Gresham's Law type of effect, for empirical knowledge is, in some ways, worse knowledge and cheaper

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knowledge than the kind that it replaces. Its very scorn of inwardness and subjectivity makes it, by definition, finally unconvincing; one is not even allowed to raise the question of conviction about it —to doubt that which has been, for all practical purposes, proved. "One can be practical even in Hell," says Lavinia in *The Cocktail Party*. One can be practical *especially* in Hell. Indeed, there is nothing else left to be. Elsewhere, and earlier, there are alternatives: to be generous, to be extravagant, to be affectionate, to be lazy, to be oneself.

Hell is not Hell for demons; they live there. It is the environment to which they are adjusted, and which offers them greatest opportunity for growth, advancement, and fruitful interdemoniacal relationships. But it is Hell precisely for those from above who must regard their presence there as evidence that their self-betrayal was more serious than they had feared, and not merely a temporary expedient. The self-betrayal of Western upper classes has been, on the whole, very thoroughgoing; and their characteristic perception of truth has largely been sacrificed. Few indeed are the gentlemen—in our culture, perhaps, there is a larger proportion of ladies—with the inner serenity and strength to go on believing they are right even when they lose; that their own inner sense of validity, if self-consistent, is an adequate source of norms. There are still a few such, as there have been for years, in the State Department, which is perhaps not the safest place to keep them; but for the most part, today's upper-status individual uses his status in order to run the middle-class show according to middle-class rules.

LOWER-STATUS INDIVIDUALS are exposed to less temptation than upper-status individuals; their souls are not thought to be worth as much and they receive fewer and poorer offers. What happens to them depends, naturally, on whether they nevertheless accept one of these offers. Most do; they settle down, that is, into the working-class routine of life, which can best be tolerated if one learns to make a virtue of monotony. It is easy to forget that a plurality of those who share the urban Western world spend one third of their lives doing noisy, repetitive, uncomfortable work at a rate they do not choose and toward ends that they cannot usually really envision. In the rest of their lives they insist equally on discipline and familiarity. Children are expected to be obedient, wives chaste; the TV runs in its accustomed channels.

For such people the test of an experience or a proposition is likely to be its conventionality. Subjectivity would be suicidal; a high level of sensitivity to external reality would be equally so. These people cannot afford to open their senses or their hearts to new perceptions or new sensations. If they ever become simultaneously sensitive to reality and aware of its possibilities, they are done for. Their routines prevent their being overwhelmed with rage, envy, and despair; undoubtedly, under our economic system, the continuous seductive din of the mass media requires that those who cannot afford to join the safari to suburbia develop a very high threshold of irritability or lose their self-esteem. Insensitivity, indeed, is hardly enough; the razor strop still protects the authoritarian father, fatigued from his day on the assembly line, from children who wish to have the blandishments of TV commercials translated into reality.

Social psychologists disagree as to whether working-class authoritarianism is genuinely rooted in character or is largely an adaptive response to a highly constrictive situation. There is not much doubt about the data; these are indeed the people who go down the line with the items on the F-scale, whip their children for the kind of sex play which induces a frozen paroxysm of permissiveness in middle-class parents, and worshiped Senator McCarthy until his behavior began to lose its veneer of conventionality under

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the glare of TV and the masterful direction of Mr. Welch. There is also not much doubt that a middle-class father who threw his weight around as much as a working-class father generally does would be a lot sicker in general; so would a middle-class mother who bought the same jolly greeting cards of fat red Santas and cute little teddy bears. But hostility to novelty, wit, and taste in the sense of a flexible perception and response to the individual qualities of materials, situations, and persons may be real and intense without being psychopathological. The working-class individual is most easily convinced by what is least disturbing to the order to which he has submitted. If disturbed, nevertheless, he is likely to withdraw or to turn nasty.

But what of those who spurn all meager offers for their souls and receive no generous ones, who are absorbed and preoccupied with the exigencies and the satisfactions of daily living under conditions that make it very difficult and often useless to try to plan for more than a day at a time—conditions that, *faute de mieux,* encourage spontaneity? These exist—the true lower class below the working class. Its members are not as numerous as those of the working class, though one reads more about them in the papers, and their colorful, violent lives tend to overshadow the short, simple, gray annals of the decent poor. But nearly a sixth of our population is truly lower class, even though our ideology of comfort and success tends to treat them as exceptional. So, indeed, they very often are.

IN TODAY'S AFFLUENT SOCIETY, a reasonable degree of social mobility from lower class is very easily achieved; indeed, it is the norm rather than the exception. In order to stay in lower class today one must either be committed to and absorbed in it as a way of life, or have a personality that either makes one entirely rigid in the face of any prospect of change or arouses such hostility in the rest of society as to excite continual punishment. That is, one must either be beat, a virtual psychotic, or a delinquent or criminal. Otherwise, one can expect to be picked up and wafted upward a certain distance merely by the technological shift that is doing away with manual labor and simple clerical work, and by the refinements of an economy that can only keep going during peacetime if nearly everybody consents to share in the rudiments of gracious living. Economic convection is not going to carry anybody quite to the top, but it does easily land people in lower-middle unless they are so oddly shaped that they break the flow.

The beat, the psychotic, and the criminal all tend to be highly subjective; they are idiotic, in the classical Greek sense. And all these types are relatively abundant in lower class. Drifters and criminals are lower-class almost by definition, while psychosis is the form that severe mental disturbance takes in lower class in preference to middle-class psychoneurosis; the lower-class individual, beset by unbearable experience, finds reality not worth distorting and abandons it. This statement is in no sense meant as derogation of the lower class or its members. "Beats" and psychotics can be just as nice as anyone and often much nicer. So may criminals; it is not necessarily a sin to commit a crime. But all these people tend to be idiotic, and, while (using Rebecca West's distinction) I much prefer idiocy—overabsorption in and preoccupation with one's private world—to lunacy—irrational subjugation to external influences—which is the official disorder of the middle classes, idiocy still has its limitations.

The worst thing about the idiotic way of life is that it just cannot be generalized at all. It is not merely that it does not teach those who live it general propositions that can be applied to other people and places. It cannot even lead to a sense of calm, inner coherence; an idiot cannot learn by experience. Idiocy at its best—that is saintly, or Dostoevskian idiocy—can lead to something else of exquisite value, to mo-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments of truth so penetrating and luminous that the rest of life is brightened by them. But these moments cannot be ordered; one cannot speak of a series of moments of truth since there is nothing serial about them. To be valuable, idiocy must be complemented and restrained by another sort of subjectivity: by artistic discipline, which is a respect for the actual properties of one's medium, whether that medium be a musical instrument, or a medium of communication, or simply oneself in one's social role. If one is to grow, one cannot simply feel and act out. One has to feel what the *inherent* possibilities are—an entirely different matter from the operator's preoccupation with what the external consequences may be.

THE LOWER-CLASS individual today does not usually have enough sense of the stable properties of life to temper his subjectivity. Unlike the middle-class man, he can still listen to his inner voice, and he knows no better source of truth. But he has no basis for telling when it is talking nonsense, or for tuning it in when it is jabbering away incoherently about the miscellaneous agonies of the past and present. Education would help with this, but we have no lower-class education—only a system by which lower-class youngsters who want to can be admitted to lower-middle-class schools.

Lower-class truth is likely, therefore, to remain even in adulthood quite purely idiotic. Like upper-class truth, it is essentially subjective. But it is much weaker in its sense of time. It is weaker in its sense of causality. Above all, it is deficient in symbols, so that there are almost no possibilities of abstraction. The result at its worst is the *Lumpen*-proletarian, whose passion is merely violence and whose love is merely lust, who is lost and helpless in a mechanical world where the machinery is hardly ever right out where you can see it. To the lower-class man, this can be destiny.

Still, in the terminology of Norman Mailer and his co-workers, he is hip rather than square; so, perhaps there is hope for him. His problem is to learn to order his experience, and to do so without turning it into a set of maxims or reducing it to purely instrumental terms. The most blatantly and continuously advertised rewards, however, become available to him only if he does just this; so those lower-class individuals who notice the larger world are peculiarly tempted to surrender to it. Can many survive to become a modern Villon or a Colin Wilson, without making a commercial production out of being an outsider? It seems unlikely. Poverty and low status in the 20th century are dangerous drugs, containing within them, perhaps, the seeds of delivery for some; but for most people they are, in truth, far more destructive in their effects than is alienation under comfortable circumstances.

More hopeful, it seems to me, is the growing middle-class tendency to insist on more variety and on uniqueness. This is not only a discernible, but a conspicuous social trend; if I am a little skeptical that it will soon have fundamental consequences, it is because I believe that the security to trust inwardness must ordinarily be developed early, in a home and family life that puts no undue emphasis on other persons' expectations. Can one really internalize the pragmatic? Can one come to feel that tentative solutions to the problems of a shifting universe are not only real and trustworthy, but one's own?

Well, some can, some do.

People do grow in the suburbs as well—or nearly as well—as elsewhere. The better sort of modern suburbanite may actually be a genuine follower of John Dewey, creating new knowledge out of open-ended experience and making it not only his own but a part of himself. And at this he had better be very good indeed. The future, as one of the most perceptive contemporary exegetical critics of modern empiricism has stated in the title of one of his best works, lies ahead.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OBSERVATIONS

GERMAN FICTION AND THE QUEST FOR PURIFICATION

THEODORE FRANKEL

SINCE the end of the war, the German literary world has been waiting for the great German novel, one that would sum up, and at the same time transcend, the experiences of the last generation. This concept of the great German novel is something new, for the Germans, with their history as a cohesive community, have never before felt that necessity for national self-definition which, for example, has prompted the enduring quest for the great American novel. The "typical" German novels have been the *Bildungsroman* and the *Familienroman,* which described the development of individuals and families inside a society whose stability was taken for granted.

In reality, however, this very social structure had been fatally affected, for over seventy-five years, by a series of revolutions, industrial and otherwise—and the horrors of the Nazi regime did not finally so much destroy the society as expose its inner decomposition. By 1945, the break in Germany's intellectual and moral traditions was fully laid open, so that German self-acceptance henceforth became a problem rather than a fact of the nation's intellectual life. More than that, the unprecedented horrors of the last stages of social decay—concentration camps, genocide, and all the rest—left such a heavy burden of guilt attached to any possible new beginning, that the search for national identity became indissolubly linked with the quest for purification.

This mixture of guilt-ridden self-exploration and an obsessive search for a new redeeming morality has furnished serious postwar German literature with the reason for its existence. And for its failure: the great German novel—the saving word—has not yet been written.

Sensitive about their failure, German writers tend to put the blame for it on their own over-involvement with the past. They are still too enmeshed in that past, they say, to transcend it (the German expression is *die Vergangenheit zu bewältigen,* "overcoming the past," and the violence of the verb expresses the vehemence of their attack). But an outsider would be inclined to seek the explanation elsewhere for their failure to "overcome" the past: is it not too much, after all, to expect of the novel? Literature—art in general—cannot solve social problems; it is fortunate when it succeeds in illuminating them. The German past will be "overcome" by the German people as a people, or not at all.

Small wonder, then, that the German novel since 1945 has run up a succession of honorable failures. One of the most accomplished of these is the recent *Billard um halbzehn* ("Billiards at 9:30") by Heinrich Böll, who is generally considered the most promising of the postwar German writers. The novel is the description of a day in the life of Robert Fähmel; it is also the history of three generations of the Fähmel family.

The founder of the family, Robert Fähmel's father, had come to Cologne at the turn of the century as a poor young architect, determined to conquer the town. He succeeds—brilliantly—thanks in large part

THEODORE FRANKEL, whose previous contributions to COMMENTARY include "My Friend Paul" (February 1957), is at present in Germany, teaching in the Overseas Program of the University of Maryland. He has also written for the *Yale Review, Midstream,* and other periodicals.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to his winning the contest to design the abbey of St. Anthony's—henceforth the symbol of his family's fortunes. He marries into an old family and has three sons. But his hope of building a large, vigorous dynasty fails, almost certainly as a judgment on the worldliness of his ambitions. Two of his sons die—one as a child while playing soldier (his last words are "give me a gun") and the second, a convinced Nazi, while fighting on the Russian front.

The third son, Robert, during his student days gets involved with a cryptic proletarian sect called "the lambs." They have sworn never to eat from the "sacrament of the buffalo"—the buffalo is the symbol of worldly authority, while the lambs, of course, represent the meek who have not yet inherited the earth. Practically all the book's characters—and they are many—are divided into lambs or buffaloes, identified through a use of symbolism so involved and repetitious as to endanger, at times, the flow and verisimilitude of the narrative.

Robert Fähmel, the hero, is neither lamb nor buffalo in Böll's mythology, but belongs to a rare third category. He is a "shepherd" called to "graze my lambs." While still in school he gets mixed up in an anti-Nazi assassination plot, is whipped with barbed wire (Christ flayed with thorns?), flees the country, is amnestied (through family connections), and returns and settles down to a non-political life. During the war, he works as a demolition expert whose moment comes in 1944 when he is ordered to destroy German installations and "cultural monuments" in the path of the retreating army. His final prize is his father's first great achievement, the abbey of St. Anthony's, and he destroys it despite the misgivings of his superiors. Nothing seems more incongruous and contemptible to Fähmel than the scruples concerning the destruction of cultural monuments on the part of generals who never hesitated to send millions to their deaths. With the demolition of the abbey, Fähmel wants "to erect a monument for those who were not 'cultural monuments' and concerning whose survival no official care had to be taken . . . a monument for the lambs whom nobody had grazed."

Robert Fähmel's son, then, unaware that it was his own father who had demolished St. Anthony's, is helping to rebuild the abbey; accidentally, he learns of his father's wartime deed. He decides to withdraw from his job—for reasons which remain obscure to him but are quite clear to the reader: the youngest member of the family refuses to be associated with the restoration of the old Germany.

All of this is squeezed into the narrative of a single day in the life of Robert Fähmel. Like every other, this day begins with billiards at half-past nine, in the sanctum of a reserved hotel room. The billiards ritual, which gives the book its title, is a retreat in the theological sense of the word, in which Fähmel, isolated from his fellow men whom he has come to despise, "communes" with God through abstract patterns created by the course of the billiard balls and "confesses" to a page boy, his sole companion, who seems to be not so much flesh and blood as an incarnation of the lamb of God.

Robert Fähmel's day comes to a close on a falling note. Three generations of the family, shrunk and battered by the catastrophes of the last fifty years, meet for their annual reunion, to take stock, so to speak, of their own—and Germany's—reduced fortunes. As the book closes, the last we see of the family is a grand gesture of expiation by the old man for having partaken of the sacrament of the buffalo: the anniversary cake, shaped to look like the abbey of St. Anthony's, has been brought in, and he cuts off the church steeple and hands it on a plate to his son.

The moral of the story is only too obviously expressed in the culminating gestures of withdrawal and resignation of the three generations: the grandfather's symbolic self-mutilation (understood as a social rather than a Freudian capitulation), the grandson's vague, almost instinctive withdrawal from the work of restoration, and—squarely in mid-focus—the hero's deliberate retreat from organized society into the sacred isolation of his billiard room. The family motto could read *"Ohne mich,"* or rather, in the mythology of shepherd, lambs, and buffaloes, "In Christ's name—without me."

THE religious coloration of this protest may be peculiar to Böll, but in his political and social disaffection he speaks for his generation, for the hostility and distrust which characterize the attitude of practi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cally the entire German intelligentsia today toward the German people. Whether they are on the right, like Gerd Gaiser, the center, like Böll, or to the left, like Wolfgang Köppen, German intellectuals have in common a sense of estrangement from their society (not just from the Adenauer regime) which in some cases—as in Böll—amounts to outright revulsion and a desire to contract out. Nor is this merely the same role of "outsider" shared in our day and age by intellectuals the world over. German intellectuals exceed the common measure of alienation.

For one thing, in Germany the intellectuals have traditionally been more deeply engaged in politics than, say, their Anglo-American counterparts, so that their present exclusion from all influence is doubly painful to them. They seem indeed to feel that they let slip a unique opportunity to seize the intellectual and moral leadership of the nation. Military defeat, economic misery, and the full disclosure of the Nazi atrocities seemed in 1945 to have discredited not only the political leaders of the past but the political process itself, and the time appeared to be ripe for a new Germany founded on morals rather than politics, led by thinkers and philosophers rather than by politicians and industrialists. In the heady atmosphere compounded of hunger, remorse, and idealism, it did not seem utopian to expect a great "cleansing" of the sins of Nazism, a national atonement which would lead to the spiritual rebirth of Germany. If the idea was admirable, it was also bound to fail. The German people found it more natural to repress their past than to atone for it, and the politicians and industrialists made their comeback to power with a rapidity and forcefulness which pushed to the sidelines the floundering intellectuals and their ideals.

Since then, the country's amazing economic and political recovery appears to have vindicated the "nothing has happened" attitude of the German public and its leaders, while the intellectuals with their call for purification have seemingly been proved wrong. Worse than wrong: irrelevant, a nuisance, in fact. The average German, his tribulations behind him and at ease in his prosperity, is annoyed by those who refuse to let the sleeping dogs of guilt lie.

As a result, indignant and resentful intellectuals—at least those who have not come to terms with the present—have been driven into the unhealthy isolation of Böll's hero. With many, opposition has become an automatic reflex; and it extends to aspects of German life which seem unexceptionable to the outsider. If almost to a man, the intellectuals abominate the *Wirtschaftswunder*—the miracle of Germany's economic recovery—it is because they feel that it has deprived the German people of deserved punishment and the chance of a saving penance. Their lingering hostility to rearmament has, in part, a similar basis. A certain sympathy for the Russians and a corresponding anti-American animus among a large part of the German intelligentsia appear to stem from the notion that the Russians—if they rather than the Americans had taken over—would have purged the old German Adam instead of resurrecting him. (How these intellectuals reconcile such a notion with conditions in East Germany is their secret.)

Whatever the case, the gulf between the intelligentsia, particularly the writers, and the German people hurts both. The German writer, above all a man with a message, needs an audience; without this vital contact, he tends to turn crank. If Böll sees social reality in black and white terms (buffalo and lamb), if he rejects the political order as such, if he flirts with a Christian anarchism of shepherd and flock that he knows to be utopian, if his hero finally ends up rejecting society and in almost total personal isolation—it is largely because Böll as a writer feels himself condemned to social irrelevance and ineffectiveness.

No doubt, this same despairing conviction of "not getting through" accounts also in large measure for the difficult style that is characteristic of German literature today. As if to give the public cause not to heed them, German writers have for some time now adhered to a veritable cult of obscurantism—stream-of-consciousness writing, tricky literary montages, flashbacks within flashbacks, symbolism, allegory, and the like. In fact, for all its occasional lapses into self-parody, Böll's slightly synthetic mythology is restrained in comparison with some of the wilder and more grotesque mannerisms made use of by the youngest generation of writers.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The rationale for this style, of course, is the attempt to reflect in torn and twisted syntax the twisted essence of the world these German writers see, to create by means of a language bent away from traditional usage the feeling of social estrangement and existential alienation. Alas, this literary revolution has come thirty years late (the thirty years, more or less, during which Germany was cut off from the mainstream of world culture), its possibilities have long since been exhausted by Joyce, Faulkner, Céline, and all the others, its capacity to shock the bourgeoisie long since worn away by familiarity. The main effect of this literary resurrection in Germany is that of a pointless anachronism so that the readers merely feel imposed upon, not shocked. In a way, the datedness of the current literary idiom is also a perfect counterpart to the writers' moral irrelevance, and both become symptomatic of the sterility of intellectuals in social isolation.

But the German people, too, have suffered from the sterility of the intellectuals' position. If nationwide contrition and cleansing were perhaps too much to expect, surely today's all but universal repression of the past is an excess in the other direction. There is something foul in the spectacle of former Nazis in high public positions, and in the widespread leniency and sympathy for unrepentant anti-Semites. There is something ignoble about the nation-wide consent to sweeping the past under the rug, to killing it with silence (most German schoolchildren are not told about Hitler) or to making it respectable by white-washing. And, finally, the anti-Jewish prejudices still held by a large percentage—possibly the majority—of the German people point to a social malady far more frightening than the more obvious hypocrisy and self-righteousness which pervade German life today.

Moreover, repression does not work as it is supposed to. The past will not stay down, pieces of it are forever floating to the surface. Concentration-camp guards, murderers a hundred times over, are discovered passing for respected citizens in their communities; a doctor responsible for the "mercy-killing" of thousands of people is found practicing medicine under an assumed name—with connivance of the highest government authorities. And sometimes, as in the most recent anti-Jewish outbreaks, the anti-Semitic sickness does not wait to be discovered but breaks out on its own, frightening the patient himself, as it were, by its intensity. Thus the unexorcised past returns again and again to haunt the uneasy consciences of the community and to start once more the vicious circle of guilt and repression.

Such a policy of repression does more than perpetuate the past and poison the present—it spoils the future. For the development of the German people must depend largely on the self-image they create for themselves, and on the national goals they set for themselves, in the knowledge of both their strengths and limitations. In the folly of suppressing or perverting the memory of their past, they commit the folly of underestimating their weaknesses, above all their once-demonstrated potential for destruction and self-destruction. At the best of times in Germany, such selective forgetfulness has resulted in that shallow, self-gratulatory philistinism that blights so much of the German landscape today (and provides the goad for much of the mordant criticism from the intellectuals); and what happened under the worst times, we know already.

Obviously, it is too easy to suggest that German intellectuals and the German public could cure each other by getting together—the intellectuals providing their generation with an honest image of themselves and the public, in accepting this image, releasing the intellectuals from their profitless isolation. The German tragedy is precisely that the two sides cannot get together; the compulsions that keep them apart (self-justification on the one side, and self-accusation on the other) are stronger than any need to be drawn together, and will continue so for some time to come. Perhaps, as the Germans say, this generation is too close to the past to accomplish the liberating work of self-knowledge. It may well take a whole generation lost in the desert of confusion and compulsion to overcome a trauma such as the German people have suffered. If so, it may be the fate of Böll and his contemporaries never to write the great German novel. But by their courage and perseverance, and at great cost to themselves, they may bring the day a little closer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE COMMUNITY

MILTON HIMMELFARB

Jewish Vote?

With a Catholic candidate for the presidency, the so-called Jewish vote was bound to attract the scrutiny of reporters and the attention of politicians.

The statistics of group voting or opinion are not ambiguous. A hundred workers, chosen at random, will vote and will answer pollsters quite differently from a hundred farmers, chosen at random. Similarly with college graduates and grade school graduates, Southerners and Northerners, Catholics and Protestants, Congregationalists and Baptists. Six years ago Gallup reported that 24 per cent of the Catholics, 31 per cent of the Protestants, and 65 per cent of the Jews disapproved intensely of McCarthy. (The percentages for intense approval were 21, 12, and 5.) There is nothing surprising about such differences. A man's circumstances, associations, and traditions will obviously affect his values and even his perception of reality.

The ambiguity in the discussion of group voting lay elsewhere, in the possible implication that the groups had more or less the same kind of political organization—that since organized labor urged the support of candidates and parties, and since Negro organizations and newspapers assessed issues and personalities in terms of Negro interests, Protestants and Catholics and Jews must be doing the same. That is not so.

(People tend to exaggerate the effect of recommendations from headquarters. When John L. Lewis failed to deliver the miners' vote to Willkie it became clear that it was not he who had delivered their vote to Roosevelt four years earlier, and official labor's war against Robert A. Taft did not keep him from getting more than enough workers' votes for easy re-election to the Senate in 1950. As for the Jews, they have no political headquarters and they do not take orders.)

It happens that a good deal is known, statistically, about the political attitudes and voting behavior of American Jews. Practically, there are two kinds of liberalism, one relating to such matters as civil liberties and international affairs and the other to minimum wages, social security, and the like. The first kind finds most of its support among the college-educated and the prosperous, and the second kind in the working class. American Jews, uniquely, are liberal in both senses. To understand why, we would have to understand the whole of modern Jewish history. This Jewish liberalism exists everywhere, not only in the United States; in England the Jewish Tory has always been the exception, and it was in France that the Jewish political stance received its classic formulation: *Juif, donc libéral.* Whatever else Jewish young men and women may do in rebellion against their parents, they do not renounce the parental liberalism.

Almost by definition, when the members of any group show such consistency in their political behavior and outlook, a powerful self-interest must be present. Yet an obvious Jewish self-interest is ordinarily hard to find, in the sense, for example, that Negroes have an obvious political self-interest. Certainly a candidate or a party judged to be anti-Israel could not expect to win the support of most Jews. Still, Israel is not really primary, as we can see from the tendency of Jews to assume that political figures they like must be pro-Israel—rather than liking them because they are pro-Israel. In his last years Roosevelt was, if not decisively pro-Arab, at least not strongly for the Palestine policy that most Jews wanted. Nevertheless,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to this day most Jews take it for granted that FDR was a firm friend in Palestinian affairs.

Nor can Jewish candidates expect to find as much automatic support from their fellow Jews as candidates in practically any other comparable group can from their fellows. If the Jews of New York were determined to see a Jewish mayor, there would long since have been one. In general, Jews will vote for a candidate because he is a Jew only when other things are equal—reputation, party affiliation, and the like—or when they feel they have been slighted politically.

Most Jews, therefore, take liberalism as such to be their self-interest, though I doubt that they think of themselves consciously as Jews when they think of politics. There is no point in being self-gratulatory about this. It is an old tradition, and it has had its fatuous episodes.

Justice, Justice

Let justice be done, though the heavens fall, would be an impressive legal motto if it were not for the medical parallel: the operation was successful but the patient died. Jewish newspapers in Miami and Denver, speaking from the patient's point of view, have been worried about a legal operation begun in July in the Miami area by the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Jewish Congress. The Florida branch of ACLU, for an agnostic, and AJCongress, for a few Jews and a Unitarian, went to court to compel the cessation of a whole range of religious practices in the public schools, from Bible reading to a horrendous dramatization of the crucifixion.

Ten years ago, where I live, Jewish representatives made a friendly recommendation to the superintendent of schools to tone down some of the excessive sectarianism of Christmas in the schools. He readily agreed. It then got about that he had given in to Jewish pressure, and the roof fell in. The Jews who lived there at the time still do not like to remember the incident, and nothing could persuade them to go through anything like it again.

What happened in Miami this summer was much more upsetting—headlines about testimony and scenes in court, vigils of prayer for the defeat of the godless, passionate resentment—and its effects were felt pretty far away. So many Jews and Jewish communities seem to have been annoyed by the court action that AJCongress published a defensive editorial in its journal, based on a survey it had made of editorial opinion and letters to the editor; but the survey itself did not escape criticism.

"Don't make trouble" is an abject philosophy, but how about the rear-echelon pugnacity that says, "Let's you and him fight"? And how sensible or fitting is it for Jews to attack Bible reading as equally unacceptable with prayers in the name of Jesus?

Unity!

Half a year ago there was a brief agitation for a central body for the Jews of the United States. The (Conservative) Rabbinical Assembly called on the Synagogue Council, and the Synagogue Council immediately agreed, to take steps toward the creation of an authoritative, central organization. The Rabbinical Assembly passed its resolution because normally, in Conservative circles, opposition to slogans of unity, democracy, and order in the Jewish community would be as unthinkable as a politician's opposition to home, mother, and flag. This time there was an even more compelling reason. After the Conservative congregational association tabled a motion for affiliation with the World Zionist Organization last year, there was great eagerness to prove that the old Conservative loyalties were not really being betrayed. A rousing vote in favor of something as tried and true as a representative organ for American Jewry was a painless way to affirm those loyalties. The absence of any particular timeliness for the proposal made no difference.

The Synagogue Council consists of six bodies: the Reform and Conservative rabbinical and congregational associations, the Orthodox congregational association, and an Orthodox rabbinical association. The effectiveness of the organization is not great, each of its six constituents having an absolute veto. Its Orthodox constituents are under great pressure from their ultras to leave, since membership implies, or can be taken to imply, recognition of non-Orthodox forms of Judaism. The Reform and Conservative elements are very much aware of all this, and the result is immobilism.

The main function of the Synagogue

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Council is to speak for American Jews in an ecclesiastical capacity. At the White House Conference on Youth early this year, the Synagogue Council representative, faithful to the views of his organization and practically every other Jewish organization, strongly opposed state aid to religious schools. For practically the first time, in such matters, there was a Jewish dissent. Some Lubavitcher Hasidim were in favor of state aid, just as they are in favor of released time. I predict that it will not be long before the Synagogue Council is silent on state aid. Pressure from the right on the Orthodox constituents will take care of that.

Since the Synagogue Council can do nothing about such things as the *kashrut* scandal —or rather *hillul ha-Shem,* desecration—it accepts invitations for talking about unity.

With the Conservative rabbis, too, frustration about their real concerns, or what should be their real concerns, may account for part of the enthusiasm for such resolutions. It is hardly because learning, piety, and good works are firmly established among us that the rabbis feel free to turn their attention elsewhere.

Of course, there is the unity of talk and the unity of deed. The Conservatives, for instance, are always for unity and *kelal Yisrael* (catholic Israel, as Solomon Schechter translated it) in general, but not necessarily in particular. Take education. There are two main kinds of Jewish schools, the communal and the congregational, and over the years the congregational school has been gaining steadily. The Conservative school system is congregational, although the *kelal Yisrael* ideology should imply support for communal schools. Nor have the Conservatives shown any great generosity or self-denial in relation to communal schools or communal educational bodies. I am not saying that communal schools are better than congregational schools, merely that the Conservatives' zeal for unity does not extend to education. But then, education is important. In the words of Dexter Keezer, who served as a public member of the War Labor Board, "The opinion and decisions/Of the members of this board/Are exclusively determined/By whose ox is being gored."

The Commissioner and the Rabbis

The New York Board of Rabbis interprets its geographical jurisdiction somewhat liberally. There are wags who say that for its purposes New York ends where Los Angeles begins. (The Board is a bitter rival of the Synagogue Council.)

This past Rosh Hashanah, the Board tangled with Police Commissioner Kennedy of New York, needlessly, and came off second. At a time when the police were on extra duty because of all the heads of state at the UN, Jewish policemen asked for the traditional right to absent themselves on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The terrible-tempered Mr. Kennedy, questioned about this on a television program, expressed gratuitous skepticism about people who seemed to feel the need to observe their religion only once a year.

The Board of Rabbis asked for an apology. Kennedy was willing only to say that any interpretation of his remark as anti-Semitic was completely wrong. The Board continued to press for an apology, Kennedy would not give in even to Mayor Wagner, and in the end he won.

The Board of Rabbis was doubly unwise. In the first place, everybody knows that Kennedy is not an anti-Semite, that he is a man of great, even tiresome, probity, and that he does not discriminate for or against anyone. In the second place, he is a lion. If you want to be on bad terms with a lion, either avoid him completely or shoot to kill. The Board did neither, and got clawed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTROVERSY

DRUG ADDICTION

M. L. HARNEY—formerly Superintendent of the Illinois Division of Narcotic Control, Assistant to the U. S. Commissioner of Narcotics, and Assistant to the Secretary, U. S. Treasury, for Law Enforcement, now retired—and STANLEY BUDNER—a member of the New York State Psychiatric Institute—here take issue with EDWIN M. SCHUR's "Drug Addiction in America & England," which appeared in our September issue. A reply by Mr. Schur follows.

Mr. Harney writes:

It is a pity that a periodical of the scholarly cast of COMMENTARY should give space to the perpetuation of the myth of an "English (or British) system" of narcotics control. The use of this phrase suggests a myth whenever it implies that there is any radical difference in the conception of narcotic drug control in two nations which subscribe to the same international agreements on the narcotics question.

The myth pursued by Mr. Schur has been referred to by a Home Office spokesman in these words: ". . . we make it clear that there is not in fact any such thing as a British system, which is an invention of certain Americans who wish to prove a particular point of view."

Your reporter impeaches his qualifications to write on this subject in his opening sentence. After referring to the Federal Bureau of Narcotics estimate of 60,000 addicts in the United States, he includes the assertion that "some medical experts believe that 1,000,000 is closer to the actual number. . . ." Actually the Federal Bureau of Narcotics has given 60,000 as a maximum possibility. Fifty thousand is perhaps more nearly the count. These figures are compiled as are other police statistics on crime. No count on crime can be exact, but it can be approximately correct. Mr. Schur cannot adduce a scintilla of respectable evidence that the addiction count is in excess of 60,000. To refer to a million addicts is pure fantasy. True, narcotic addiction is a hidden vice, but as Mr. Schur takes pains to point out, most addicts are in a life of crime (as he does not seem to grasp, most American addicts are recruited in the underworld). As such, they get arrested and get counted as addicts. This is only one of many ways in which addiction figures are compiled. If, as Mr. Schur seems to imply, the FBN is engaged in some sort of scheme to hide from public view 940,000 addicts, certainly by this time some other law enforcement agency, some legislative committee, or some sociologist would have mined out such a tremendous mother lode of addiction.

Mr. Schur bears heavily on the profit motive in creating addiction. Actually an analysis of thousands of individual cases discloses that, in the main, addiction spreads from addict to neophyte, a form of social contagion. The drug, not the peddler, is the thing. Early in this century when narcotics were essentially free articles of commerce and no more profit was attached to them than to any other merchandise, we had one addict for every four hundred of our people. With the operation of a restricting program that figure was gradually and steadily reduced. There was an alarming relapse in the late 1940's, confined to a few large cities only, and which is now checked, and today the country-wide incidence has been reduced to approximately one in four thousand and the daily drug intake of the individual addict has been reduced many fold.

Opiates are drugs which create a dependence. The victim feels he must continue their use. Opiates also create a tolerance; that is, they require that the dose be constantly increased. In addition, these drugs bring sensuous reactions which caused Cocteau to call opium "the milk of paradise." To say that addiction to such a drug could be con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trolled by making it respectable and by having a doctor or a policeman or a bartender supply it cheaply is an affront to logic, but the statement is dressed with plausibility by asserting that some such system works in Britain, a variation on the theme of the greener hills farther away. This is the "British system" myth.

Besides misdrawing and confusing the general picture, Mr. Schur gives us some unhappy sweeping generalities. For instance, he says: "The few prosecutions [in the United Kingdom] for overprescribing have, in fact, been unsuccessful—the court upholding the doctor's professional judgment in such matters." How could a case like that of Dr. John Bodkin Adams escape Mr. Schur's notice? After he had been unsuccessfully tried for murder arising out of peculiarities in his narcotic and other practice, Adams was convicted on criminal charges and lost his identity as a doctor for misprescribing opiates.

Of course, there is less drug addiction in the United Kingdom, which has never had a narcotic problem as we have known it here. There are obvious reasons other than those indicated by Mr. Schur to explain this fact. They include vast differences in the efficiency of the two criminal police systems. Policing is simpler in an insular, homogeneous community. English courts dispense justice much more speedily than do ours. Many other reasons could be cited, but the paramount one is the *lack of cultural susceptibility* among the English to narcotic addiction, a tradition that "it just isn't done." Many of your readers should have no difficulty in following this reasoning. How often we have been told that Irish Americans (like me) are (or were) fifty times more likely to become addicted to alcohol than Jewish Americans.

For the other side of the coin, one need only go to another British entity, the colony of Hong Kong whose government estimates the number of addicts from 180,000 to 250,000 in that little island. Recently Hong Kong had occasion to restudy this problem and a White Paper was issued. Now, the British Empire may be fading, but it still has fine civil servants, and we may be assured that Hong Kong had the benefit of all the wisdom which the British could muster on this subject. Their recommendations for improvement included more and stricter law enforcement and compulsory disintoxication and treatment of the addict!

* * *

Mr. Budner writes:

Although Edwin M. Schur has many excellent things to say about our inadequate handling of the narcotics problem in the United States, his discussion of the narcotics user and of the causes of narcotics usage requires considerable amplification and emendation. Any adequate discussion of the "addict" must start off with the critical distinction, ignored at least by Mr. Schur, between physiological addiction (the need for drugs to control withdrawal symptoms) and psychological habituation (the need for drugs for the positive satisfactions they provide). The problem of narcotics is not one of addiction but one of habituation. Were addiction our problem, it would be easy. Once the addict had been isolated from sources of the drug and been seen through the withdrawal period until all symptoms had vanished, the addict, lacking any direct physiological need for the drug, would no longer be an addict. The problem, however, is not the curing of addiction, but the reduction of a phenomenally high (90 per cent, according to Mr. Schur) recidivist rate.

Understanding the narcotics problem involves finding out why individuals become drug habitués and not why they become drug addicts. And by "why" is not meant the determination of what one factor differentiates drug habitués from other people, for (as Mr. Schur fails to recognize in his discussion of causation) no one thing will differentiate in this or any area of human behavior (other than that of motherhood). Rather, the question is what sequence of factors leads to drug usage.

The first factor (and one which Mr. Schur tends to emphasize to the exclusion of others) is awareness and/or experience of the narcotics effect. Since all human behavior is learned behavior, this first precondition is tautological. The requisite awareness and experience may derive from a number of sources: from training by phys-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

icians and nurses; from the use of narcotics as a pain killer by patients; and from experimental trial usage as a novel experience or at the insistence of friends. At the same time, knowledge of the effects of drugs does not necessarily or even frequently lead to usage, habituation, or addiction. Most physicians do not become users; most patients given drugs for medical reasons are effectively weaned away from the drug by the time they leave the hospital; and many adolescents (possibly the majority) give up drugs after trying them once or twice.

A second precondition, closely related to the first, is access to drugs. Aside from the individual who is prescribed narcotics for medical reasons, most users experience the drug effect because drugs are available to be experienced and continue to use them because they are available to be used. People in the field of medicine and individuals living in milieus with high addiction rates, having both the opportunity to experience and the sources of supply for continued usage of narcotics, provide a disproportionate share of addicts and habitués. Although it appears disconcertingly obvious to state that individuals who do not have access to and experience of narcotics will not become habitués, one cannot compare drug users and non-users unless this fact is taken into account. Because most people lead lives in which access to and consequently experience of drugs is minimal, the pool of possible drug habitués is far greater than the number of actual drug users. But it should also be remembered that most of those with access to and experience with drugs do not become narcotic habitués.

This brings us to the last precondition, the factor of individual predisposition. Mr. Schur is somewhat skeptical about the role which this factor plays mainly because of his failure to distinguish between addiction and habituation. Although everyone, given repeated administrations of narcotics sufficient to build up a physiological need, can probably become an addict, only a limited, though unknown, number become habitués. Individual predisposition includes both personality and situational elements. Probably the greater the stress, the frustration, and the hopelessness of the situation with which the individual must contend, the more likely is he to seek extrinsic sources of satisfaction. At the same time, even in identical situations, those who are initially more passive, more helpless, more easily frustrated, and less able to withstand stress, are the ones most likely to seek relief through drugs or other outlets. What the predisposing factors are, whether of personality or situation, may well differ for different groups. Quite possibly, the personality and situational conditions which lead the slum dweller to become a drug habitué are not the same as those which lead the physician to do so. In short, susceptibility to drug habituation is a function of a number of factors—need, access, and knowledge. And in terms of these causal schema, it is not as illogical as Mr. Schur seems to think to ascribe usage on the one hand to the search for new experiences and on the other to a basic passivity. The first trait refers to the probability of exposure to the narcotic effect, the second to the probability of finding that effect a major source of satisfaction.

Given this general picture of the narcotics user, a number of the conclusions reached by Mr. Schur become untenable. For example, he concludes or implies that not all addicts are sick, or at least, not addicts because they are sick. In support of this conclusion, Mr. Schur refers to the "normal addicts." If the problem is habituation and not addiction, the existence of normal addicts is irrelevant, although it may well be that the ridiculously small number of successfully weaned addicts comes from this group of normal addicts. But the question is one of whether there are normal habitués. Any adequate answer to this question requires an adequate definition of that ambiguous and connotative term "sickness." Mr. Schur ignored the question of what is meant by sick—perhaps wisely, since any definition would involve a digression longer than the original article. However, if we define sickness as an inability to cope with the environment (and minus a number of necessary qualifications this is the most tenable definition of sickness), then drug habituation represents one of a number of alternative responses by the individual to his sickness. Parenthetically, it is important that drug habituation be seen as one of a number of alternative responses. For example, the far more prevalent and socially

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

far more disruptive problem of alcoholism occurs, to a large extent, among individuals who are narcotics prone. Interestingly enough, the recent development of drug addiction among young Jews as a problem may reflect the effects of the cultural proscription of alcohol as a means of achieving feelings of adequacy among Jews.

To some extent, Mr. Schur's failure to understand clearly the nature of the narcotics problem vitiates some of his other points. For example, Mr. Schur is legitimately concerned with showing that much of the anti-social behavior exhibited by narcotics users should be blamed not on the effects of the drug but on society's response to the use of drugs. However, he finds himself compelled to ascribe the inadequacies of addicts in sex, marriage, and work to the effects of narcotics. But once it is recognized that narcotics are used as a substitute for contending with one's inadequacies, the explanation of the poor functioning by drug habitués in the sexual, marital, and occupational spheres may well be due to initial personality inadequacies and not to drug usage.

Despite these criticisms, there are many excellent aspects to Mr. Schur's article. His comparison of the relative effectiveness of the British system of handling the narcotics problem with the absolute ineffectiveness of our own, his questioning of prevailing stereotypes of the addict, e.g., the dope fiend, and his suggestions for changes in our present methods of coping with the problem are well taken and well expressed. But it is fortunate that his recommendations do not derive their validity from his knowledge of the psychology and etiology of drug usage.

* * *

Mr. Schur replies:

Having read Mr. Harney's assertion elsewhere that proponents of the British approach to addiction use, as he has written, "a technique reminiscent of the Hitler 'Biglie,'" I was not at all surprised to find him greatly vexed by my article. Limitations of space permit me only to comment on a few major points he raises. Mr. Harney states that the British "system" is a myth, quoting a Home Office spokesman to that effect. While I was in England, I confronted the Home Office with this strange statement (circulated by, and apparently solicited by, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics). A Dangerous Drugs Branch official explained it in the following way:

1. It is misleading to speak of a British "system" which suggests a distinct plan, decided upon and put into effect at a particular time. Actually the current "practice" or "approach" has evolved slowly through developing medical procedures and outlooks. Thus, while this argument might be a valid objection to the term "system"—and Mr. Harney should note that almost invariably I used the terms "approach" and "practice"—such semantic quibbling cannot erase significant differences between actual practices regarding addiction in the two countries.

2. The official also noted that the *laws* in the two countries *are* essentially the same. In my article, I indicated that England's Dangerous Drugs Act establishes rigorous control over all narcotic supplies; however, the crucial principle regarding medical treatment of addiction is not found in this "law" but in a Ministry of Health committee report. Law or not, this statement (disseminated to doctors by the Home Office) is a major facet of British drug policy.

3. The official stated finally that he did not want to tell Commissioner Anslinger "how to run his business." I think this remark explains the real reason for the disavowal of a special British "system." Although the official admitted to me that the statement (quoted by Mr. Harney) might be misleading, it seemed that his key desire was to avoid becoming involved in American disputes. One may only wonder whether British officials experience direct pressure from the Federal Bureau of Narcotics to play down the fact that their approach is different.

The vital difference, stressed in my article, once again is that in Britain doctors have almost complete professional autonomy to make decisions concerning the treatment of addicts. Mr. Harney objects to my statement that ordinarily doctors are not prosecuted or convicted for prescribing drugs for addicts; I was merely relating what was told me by a Home Office official (who, I pre-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sume, considered the Bodkin Adams case to fall in rather a special category). Apparently American law enforcers refuse to admit the simple (and perhaps, to them, incredible) fact that in Britain addiction is treated primarily as a medical problem, whereas in this country it is dealt with as a police problem.

Mr. Harney also feels that I misrepresent the American situation, especially with regard to the number of addicts. The estimate I cited is reported by Dr. Marie Nyswander in *The Drug Addict as a Patient* (New York, 1956). Dr. Nyswander has had considerable experience (both with the United States Public Health Service and in private practice) treating addicts, and I would strongly recommend her fine book to all interested readers. Similarly, the late Dr. Hubert S. Howe, chairman of the New York Academy of Medicine's committee on addiction, asserted five years ago that official figures constituted "a very conservative estimate." Many serious students of addiction share these views. Mr. Harney's reference to "respectable evidence" is interesting. Spokesmen for the Narcotics Bureau have denounced all critics of their policy as "pseudo-experts" who "conceal their ignorance by ostentation of seeming wisdom" (these "pseudo-experts" include eminent judges, attorneys, doctors, and social scientists). Quite probably the only data or statements Mr. Harney would accept as "respectable" would be those prepared by enforcement authorities—or at least supporting their point of view.

A more sensible point raised by Mr. Harney is his reference to possible differences in "cultural susceptibility" to addiction. This matter is one I should have liked to discuss had there been enough space. Without doubt it is true that there are various relevant social differences between America and Britain. Furthermore, given the many variables involved, there is no way to demonstrate conclusively that the benign drug situation in Britain is due solely to the enlightened policies. Still, the mere fact that differences exist between the countries in no sense means that the British approach might not work a major improvement here. And above all, the British policy makes sense, while ours does not. Mr. Harney may think ours does too, but I submit that most disinterested students of addiction find it illogical, ineffective, and barbarously inhumane.

IT SEEMS TO ME that really Mr. Budner and I are not in very great disagreement. My statement that it is possible neither to cure the addict against his will nor to insure abstinence after forced withdrawal indicates my agreement with him—that the major problem (as far as *treatment* is concerned) is what Mr. Budner calls "psychological habituation." Similarly, I do indicate, near the end of my article, that drug-taking provides addicts with satisfactions of some sort (if only in a negative sense—by alleviating frustrations, dissatisfactions, and insecurities). It is quite a jump, though, from these statements to an assertion of the addict's inevitable psychopathology. The trouble is that there is a certain circularity in diagnosing the addict—who by the very fact of his addiction is considered to be sick. As Mr. Budner notes, the problem of what constitutes sickness is a very large one indeed; quite likely little would be served by any brief attempt on my part to tackle it here.

If Mr. Budner's contention is correct, then certainly the malfunctioning I attribute to the drug's effects might well be attributable instead to "initial personality inadequacies." The much more important point, however (and I think Mr. Budner agrees with me on this), is that neither the effects of the drugs *nor* the alleged personality problems of the addict directly produce the illicit trafficking and addict-crime which plague us today in this country. This situation is where our repressive laws come into play. Whatever the etiology of addiction may be, we have driven addicts into much anti-social behavior that is only secondarily attributable to addiction as such. To suggest an analogy—whether women seeking abortions do so for quite rational reasons or because of underlying psychic disturbances, it is simply the demand for such operations (coupled with repressive law) which nurtures the illicit trade with its attendant costs and dangers. In the same way, through policy, we have condemned addicts to a life of crime and demoralization. As a human being, and a product of his society, the addict deserves better than this.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS FROM READERS

Tragic, Aesthetic, Pragmatic

To the Editor of Commentary:

Not many years before his death, John Dewey in Commentary [January 1948] addressed himself once more to those European intellectuals who . . . still persisted in equating pragmatism with the practicable, the materialistic, and the "successful." Sidney Hook in his "Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life" [August 1960] does more than merely continue Dewey's efforts in correcting such distortions; he attempts to prove that far from being "a superficial philosophy of optimism . . ." pragmatism is "grounded in a recognition of the tragic sense of life. . . ." I should like to comment on phases of Professor Hook's viewpoint. . . .

(1) To begin with, Professor Hook's statement that critics have ignored the "tragic sense" in pragmatism is accurate only if we accept his erroneous but conventional concept of tragedy. . . . Since he refuses to accept the "tragic" as an aesthetic category . . . he logically infers that critics have been culpable of some intellectual dereliction. His untenable assumption has led him to search in the wrong places. The situations which he discusses throughout his article—the conflict between good and good, good and right, right and right—are moral ones and hence are found not only in the ethical and religious geniuses of history but even in many textbooks on the subject. . . .

(2) Although I have suggested above that the "tragic" is an exclusively aesthetic concept, I am well aware that even in the history of aesthetic theory, the majority of thinkers have, like Professor Hook (though for various reasons and with different solutions), traditionally dismissed this concept in preference for one which views it in terms of morals, religion, and metaphysics. . . . Since the tragic permeates every serious value which man considers vital to his being, we can readily understand why its compelling presence made itself felt in all the arts. . . .

(3) My comments on the generic concept of tragedy will lack validity, I think, at one point and for theists only: those whose orientation includes the faith in a post-Messianic paradise where the completely redeemed will know no frustration whatsoever. . . . [Thus] Professor Hook never actually deals with the "tragic sense" but only with pragmatism's supremely moral ability (in contrast to other philosophic and religious schools) to deal effectively with the evils that beset man. It remains purely for other naturalistic moralists or anti-pragmatists to determine whether he has proved his case. I should like to suggest that since Professor Hook has chosen for illustrative material moral situations in which almost all the participants seem to be highly intelligent, logical, responsible, and courageous personalities . . . he [might have] titled his article, "Pragmatism and the Heroic Sense of Life."

George Kimmelman

Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Hook *writes:*

Because I do not believe that "the tragic" is an "exclusively" aesthetic category, it does not at all follow that I refuse to recognize its aesthetic dimension. There is a perfectly legitimate sense in which we speak of tragic situations in life and history. To deny this is as arbitrary as proclaiming that the "comic" can *only* be applied to a play, or that one can only "joke" on a stage. But *if* Mr. Kimmelman believes that the tragic is "exclusively" an aesthetic category, what can he possibly mean when he also writes: "Since the tragic permeates every serious value which man considers vital to his being . . . "?

"Syllabus Errorum"

To the Editor of Commentary:

You might like to know that Arthur Hertzberg's article "The Protestant 'Establishment,' Catholic Dogma, and the Presidency" [October] is being read at table to the hundred Jesuits of the Saint Louis University Community. . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One howler, though, had heads shaking: the notion that the *Syllabus Errorum* is an infallible document. Rabbi Hertzberg should not have trusted Bishop Pike and *Life* like that.

EDWARD DUFF, S.J.
Editor

Social Order
St. Louis, Missouri

More on American Soldiers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Andrew Hacker's review of *The Professional Soldier* by Morris Janowitz [September] was titled by a most insulting and defamatory epithet, "Specialists in Violence." I cannot help but wonder where anyone would be today if there was no professional soldier to stop the world conquest and murders of a Hitler and his ilk. Thank God we did have such men and that they were "professional soldiers." . . .

I protest the erroneous statements that out of 2,177 cadets of the U. S. Military Academy in the classes of 1959, 1960, and 1961 there were only 15 Jewish cadets. The actual figures for these years were 43, 37, and 42.

Hacker further asks, "Why do these military men choose a career of killing?" May I point out that the pacifist cult of giving up when the enemy advances usually means slavery or extermination—hence to protect themselves and his country, the soldier is obliged to kill in self-defense. . . . Having associated with professional soldiers over a span of fifty years, I can add that there is no group who hates war more. . . .

Hacker's final question is most amusing: "It must be asked if our military managers are capable of defending us in the event of another shooting war." I refer this Cornell professor to a simple textbook called *American History*; he will find therein an astonishing statement—that the American professional soldier has NEVER lost a war. . . .

(MAJOR, RET.) SAMUEL EDELMAN
Philadelphia, Pa.

MR. HACKER *writes:*

I am glad that Major Edelman caught my error in arithmetic. According to the table on p. 98 of *The Professional Soldier,* there were 42 Jewish cadets—not 15—in the Classes of 1959, 1960, and 1961 at West Point. Major Edelman's own figures do seem somewhat high to me. I certainly appreciate being reminded that we have won all of our wars so far. But this fact in and of itself gives us no standard for evaluating military performance, and that is my chief concern. I sometimes wonder, for example, why it took us over three years to win World War II. If I ask why we didn't complete the job in eighteen months, I want to assure Major Edelman that this is a serious question and not a wisecrack. If he thinks that questions like this should not be raised, then I am anxious to know what aspects of our military life may be discussed. Is nothing but praise the order of the day?

Washington Intelligence

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Only a hopelessly naive optimist would attempt to characterize Professor DeMott's "Looking for Intelligence in Washington" [October] as a positive commentary on "national purpose," even allowing that such words have meaning beyond a kind of neo-Spenglerian word sophistication. . . .

FRANCESCO CORDASCO
Department of Education
South Orange, New Jersey

Catholics & Democrats

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was very interested to read Seymour Martin Lipset's "Some Statistics on Bigotry in Voting" [October]. . . . I would tend to agree with his analysis of the Smith campaign, and feel that he is undoubtedly on the right track in regard to the Kennedy campaign as well. . . .

(THE RT. REV.) JAMES A. PIKE
Diocese of California
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One error mars Seymour Lipset's otherwise lucid article. He concludes from an early statistical study (by William Ogburn and Nell Talbot) of the Smith-Hoover election that prohibition, not Catholicism, figured as the leading issue in 1928. But Lipset's conclusion is invalid, for the study investigated only the Smith vote. Curiously, the Hoover vote, where the anti-Catholic and dry sen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

timent presumably lay, escaped Ogburn and Talbot's analysis.

My own view . . . is that Catholicism was the overriding issue in 1928. As Samuel Lubell and others have pointed out, the most important fact about the 1928 returns was the size of the Democratic vote. According to recent computer work, the closest correlate of this vote was a high Catholic population. . . . Whether urban or rural, foreign- or native-born, Democratic or Republican, Catholics voted for Al Smith with an accord that easily overcame anti-Catholic votes.

Catholic loyalty to the Democratic party persisted long after 1928. It is only recently that younger Catholic voters, for whom 1928 is but a vicarious experience, have been enticed away from the party. The injection of Catholicism into the 1960 campaign, for better or worse, re-cemented political loyalties of the largest religious group in the United States.

DAVID BURNER

New York City

Appeasement?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Professor Riesman, ["Controversy," October] suggests that his ideas imply a new approach to world problems. . . . His main ideas can be stated in the form of two propositions—an explicit one, which suggests that the U. S. and Russia can make a "deal" if they disregard the interests of their allies, and an implicit one, that we must strive after peace at any price. This was, of course, the official policy of the British government under Neville Chamberlain.

JACK FOX

Los Angeles, California

Disagreement on von Mises

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As the translator of Ludwig von Mises' *Epistemological Problems of Economics,* I must express the keenest disappointment in Mr. Francis Golffing's article "Varieties of Conservative Thought" [October].

How can Mr. Golffing imagine that von Mises "vehemently denies that he is dealing with meanings; i.e., significances or interpretations . . ." and takes "a quixotic, anti-ideological stance." For von Mises is quite clear in stating that "As a rule, the situation to which man consciously refers can be analyzed only with concepts that make reference to meaning. . . ." (*Epistemological Problems of Economics*). In *Human Action* von Mises writes, "Every action is always based on a definite idea about causal relations. . . . Action without thinking, practice without theory are unimaginable." In the same book he also says, "There is no hope of eradicating the aggression mentality if one does not explode entirely the ideological fallacies from which it stems." . . .

GEORGE REISMAN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The great achievement of von Mises' praxeology . . . is precisely that it presents a *formal* theory of human action. Praxeology, economic theory, deals with the deduced consequences of the *fact* . . . that people employ means to achieve desired ends.

An example of an economic law that successfully prescinds form from content is the well-known old law of demand: that if the demand for a given supply of a good rises, its price will also rise. This law is true . . . whether the ends are moral or immoral, whether the good is obtained for rational or "unconscious" reasons.

It is difficult to say which of Professor Golffing's passages is the most (unconsciously!) humorous; certainly a candidate for top honors is the point where he uses Max Planck to accuse von Mises of being a determinist and ignoring man's free will. . . . He (in *Theory and History*) has been one of the social sciences' most fervent champions of free will and opponents of "scientism" . . . necessarily so, because his laws deal with the universal-formal rather than the concrete and contentual.

Rivaling the above passage is Golffing's shock at finding that von Mises limits his scientific investigation to the study of means, since he believes that ends are not open to rational or scientific decision. . . . How in the world can Golffing not realize that this has been the position of virtually every investigator in the physical and social sciences—and philosophy—for the last fifty years? . . .

Golffing seems puzzled at von Mises' considering consumers' goods as the "hub of the total universe of desirables." . . . This posi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion stems from the definition of "consumer good." Man is born into a niggardly world with only a *potential* of abundance; and that potential can only be activated by man's working to transform given land and natural resources. . . . It is then no mystery why capital is only evaluated for the part that it plays in the production of the directly useful consumer goods. That Golffing totally misunderstands von Mises' discussion of consumer goods is also revealed by his statement that "Intangible goods are outside von Mises' concern," as also, Golffing notes, for Marx. The joke, however, is finally on Golffing: von Mises, and his Austrian forebears, have precisely broadened economics from the classical preoccupation with only tangible "wealth" to include intangible goods and services. . . .

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

New York City

MR. GOLFFING *writes:*

Mr. Reisman's objection to the passage in my article where I refer to von Mises' contempt for "meanings" turns, it seems to me, on a quibble. Obviously, I am not charging von Mises with contempt for meaning in every accepted sense of that word: von Mises is anything but a Dadaist poet. I had hoped to make it clear—by my definition of meanings as "interpretations" or "significances"—that the master concepts of this writer are (1) intolerant of the known variations in human goal-setting and hence automatic, monolithic, and founded on a priori values, and (2) inimical to that element in human action which alone makes action significant, i.e. the vision of an unrealized justice and dignity.

Mr. Reisman's last quotation seems to me to bear out completely what I have said about von Mises' "anti-ideological" stance; a stance I wouldn't have objected to if von Mises had been scrupulously honest about his own ideological assumptions. Surely, his own phrasing, "ideological fallacies," suggests that there must be an "ideological rightness" to which he holds the key; yet he has never bothered to draw the line where it should be drawn: between "good" ideology (his own) and an ideology he considers bad. He has preferred to pose as the pure, *voraussetzungslose* "theorist," to whom only the forms of discourse matter, not its content. This I regard as bad faith, for von Mises' theory is loaded with substantive assumptions, admonitions, and vituperations which are entirely outside the scope of, and in crass contradiction to, a purely formal theory of human conduct. . . .

I am glad to know that my unconscious humor has given Mr. Rothbard an occasion for rejoicing. For my part, I find little cause for rejoicing in his conscious (or rather self-conscious) seriousness. He simply restates von Mises' axioms, but without the master's aptness and brilliance of phrasing. . . .

I disagree with Mr. Rothbard's view that the ends of action are inscrutable, as I did with the selfsame view as stated by von Mises. For further light I refer Mr. Rothbard to my article "Notes Towards a Utopia" (*Partisan Review*, Summer 1960).

I agree with Mr. Rothbard's statement that "man is born into a niggardly world with only a potential of abundance." Neither do I object to anyone's "evaluating capital only for the part it plays in the production of . . . consumer goods." As regards "intangible goods" I challenge Mr. Rothbard to show me where, in von Mises' *oeuvre*, this question is seriously discussed. Since the area of intangible goods adjoins, perilously, that of "ultimate ends," I doubt that von Mises ever felt called upon to examine it; in any case, none of his praxeological statements seems to me to point beyond the bounds of a circumspect, and by now somewhat stale, meliorism.

Admiration

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to communicate my admiration for the thoughts expressed, though so briefly, by Maurice Cohen in his review "Man the Measure" in the October issue of COMMENTARY. Admiration does not necessarily mean identity of views, and—what is entirely understandable in so brief a presentation—I do not feel that Mr. Cohen has told us precisely what he holds concerning several historical and philosophical questions fundamental in the group of issues he raises. But he does succeed beautifully in cutting through much underbrush and striking toward a vital center. . . .

OSCAR GASS

Washington, D. C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Communism & American Radicals

AMERICAN COMMUNISM AND SOVIET RUSSIA. By THEODORE DRAPER. Viking Press. 558 pp. $8.50.

Reviewed by DENNIS H. WRONG

THEODORE DRAPER'S previous book, *The Roots of American Communism,* covered the early years of American Communism from the Russian Revolution to roughly the end of 1922. It also subjected to close scrutiny the pre-Communist radical movements and the factions within these movements from which most of the American Communist leaders were recruited. The present book brings the story up to the autumn of 1929, closing with the final defeat and expulsion of Jay Lovestone and his followers after their futile resistance to the orders of the Comintern, ultimately of Stalin, to abandon their exclusive leadership of the American party which had been ratified by a party convention earlier in the year.

Draper's ultimate goal is to write the history of the party up to 1945. Since the party achieved its greatest influence in the 1930's and early 40's, one may be disposed to regard the first two volumes as an extended prelude to the main part of the historian's task. And since the two books together are over a thousand pages in length, one may wonder with awe how many more will be required to achieve Draper's aim. But the present book persuades us that such a view is a misconception and that the rest of the story will amount largely to the study of variations on a theme, at least so far as the internal life and structure of the party is concerned. "At every crisis and turning point," Draper writes, "such as the outbreak of war in 1939 or the downfall of Earl Browder in 1945, the leaders seemed to be responding to influences and pressures out of the distant past rather than to the immediate present. . . .The more I dug, the more I became convinced that the first decade of the American Communist party's existence was the basic one for an understanding of its fundamental nature."

Previous students of American Communism have described the defeat of the Lovestoneites, following the earlier ouster of the supporters of Trotsky, as the final phase in the "Stalinization" of the party that reduced it to the docile instrument of Soviet policy it has been ever since. This judgment is correct enough if by "Stalinization" is meant the ending of the open factional conflicts that dominated the party's life through its first decade of existence. Afterward—with the exception of the short-lived group led by John Gates that tried in 1957 to reorient the party after the Hungarian Revolution—differences over theory and policy within the party could only, as in the Soviet Union itself, be expressed in muted, Aesopian form. But if "Stalinization" is equated with the direct intervention of the Soviet leaders in the affairs of the American party and the willing acquiescence of American Communists to Moscow's orders even when these orders contradicted their own recently expressed opinions and policies, then the party was, as Draper shows, "Stalinized" from the very beginning. Hence his title, in some ways a misleading one.

Draper modestly suggests that his use of previously unexplored materials may pave the way for future researchers on American Communism. But it is hard to see how anyone can hope to match the present volume in richness of sources, let alone in the lucidity and objectivity with which the story is told. Its position as the definitive work on the first decade of American Communism seems almost impregnable. Not only did Draper uncover the confidential minutes of the top committees of the U.S. party between 1919 and 1929 and stenographic copies of discussions in Moscow bearing on the American party, but he had numerous long personal interviews with such former

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leading Communists as Lovestone, Browder, James Cannon, Bertram Wolfe, and many others. Communists, he remarks, do not usually write memoirs, so, except in the improbable event that future defections occur among the few remaining veterans in the top American leadership, further material from personal sources is unlikely to appear.

Draper's project was conceived as part of the series on Communism in American Life supported by the Fund for the Republic. Six years ago, when the series was first planned, its subject was one of the most controversial and politically explosive issues in American life even though the CP had long since passed the peak of its influence. Now, happily, even retrospective fascination with domestic Communism has waned. So although Draper's studies are no longer as relevant to public controversy, McCarthyism has nevertheless yielded an unexpected return to scholars of American radical history.

But why should anyone who is not a specialist be interested any longer in so voluminous and detailed an examination of a Communist party which, in contrast to those of several other countries, has always been small and sectarian, except for a few brief moments in the 30's? American radicalism doubtless has a future, but not one that is likely to draw inspiration from the Communist experience in any but a negative sense. Illusions about the Soviet Union or Chinese Communism may very well be revived as the cold war waxes and wanes, sympathy for the appeasement of or even capitulation to foreign Communist powers conceivably might develop, but it is hard to believe that Russia (or China) will ever again be upheld as a model to which it is passionately hoped and believed American history will eventually conform. For it was just such hopes and expectations that led the American Communists to subordinate themselves to Moscow, to "exchange the nationalism of their own countries for the nationalism of another country—in the name of internationalism," as Draper put it in *The Roots of American Communism*. The transformation of a native radical movement into a Soviet fifth column—who can believe that this could happen again, that the decline of American Communism is not in this sense a permanent one?

One cannot help raising this question, but it is the measure of Draper's achievement that he succeeds in inducing the reader to forget it and become engrossed in his story. Without ever giving in to the temptation to sensationalize his material, he manages to convey the pathos of the careers of several of his leading figures and the drama of the interaction between Moscow and the American party. Without violating the sober, even pace of his narrative, he suggests the sinister chill evoked by an angry Stalin shouting at the defiant Lovestone and Gitlow, "When you get back to America, nobody will stay with you except your wives. There is plenty of room in our cemeteries." This in that year of innocence 1929.

No, it will not happen again. And the Communist party never became a maker and shaker of American life. But it did thrive once, almost extinguishing the flickering spirit of American radicalism, a spirit we may still find uses for in the future.

Austrian Ideas & Hitler

A Study in Austrian Intellectual History. By Robert A. Kann. Praeger. 367 pp., ill. $6.00.

Vienna and the Young Hitler. By William A. Jenks. Columbia University Press. 252 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by Alfred Werner

Dr. Kann perceives a cyclical development in Austrian history from the late Baroque to early Romanticism (from the middle of the 17th to the middle of the 19th century): long conservative periods alternate with short liberal ones. Reading his study, one gets the impression that Austria's history has continued to be a series of shifts to the present day. Yet this determinist outlook has been challenged severely by recent events. Since the establishment of the second Austrian Republic in 1945 Austrian politics have had a new look—during the past fifteen years the mildly conservative Roman Catholic People's party (descendant of the more rightist Christian Social party) and the mildly leftist Social Democratic party (less Marxist than it had been up to its dissolution in 1934) have been forming

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

coalition government. Visiting my native country, I found that the intense conflict between left and right that was known to me during the first Austrian Republic had given way to close cooperation between the the two major parties, despite the obvious ideological and economic differences.

In his treatment of Austria's more distant past, Dr. Kann wisely avoids the terms "left" and "right," and even "reactionary" and "progressive," while weaving his book around the fascinating figures of Abraham a Sancta Clara (1644–1709), the court preacher, and Joseph von Sonnenfels (1732–1817), the crusading publicist (in a sense, the book's title is misleading, for scores of important Austrian intellectuals, contemporaries of these two, are either barely mentioned or not mentioned at all). Indeed, both of these men, here introduced to Americans for the first time, had anti-liberal tendencies, if the term "liberal" is used to denote, on the one hand, freedom from prejudice, and, on the other, a tendency toward democratic forms. Both men were extremely one-sided (without being aware of it), and neither had even an inkling of democratic procedure. Still, Sonnenfels is closer to our concept of a liberal; the purpose of the reforms he fought for, educational and otherwise, was to enable a much larger number of people to participate in the political and cultural life of the country. For Abraham a Sancta Clara, on the other hand, anyone outside of the clergy or the aristocracy existed only as an object of condescending charity.

Ulrich Megerlin—to call the priest by his original name—migrated to Vienna from a small Swabian town in 1662, during a "conservative" period punctured by such catastrophes as a great pestilence and the Turkish siege of Vienna. As "Abraham a Sancta Clara," this Augustinian monk made himself the spokesman of the people, and his language—humorous and often rather coarse—deliberately catered to the common man. Yet he was anything but a socialist, nor did he resemble the leftist priests of modern France. Abraham supported the church and the aristocracy completely, even though he attacked their luxurious mode of living and their abuse of the peasants. Tradesmen, servants, farmers, women were to keep their place. He emphasized the dignity of rural labor, but demanded of the peasants that they accept their hard earthly lot without murmur, and he forbade them to rise up in rebellion.

Abraham reserved his fury for the external foe, the Ottoman Turk, and the internal enemy, the Protestant and—most particularly—the Jew. Abraham revived all the anti-Jewish canards of the Middle Ages in his sermons. Women were altogether evil, according to Abraham, and should be confined to the customary *"Kirche, Kinder, Kueche"* duties. Children of course were to be kept from evil company and evil pleasures. His, then, was a paternalistic approach to a society which should be improved but not really changed; it was a social philosophy which, as Dr. Kann reminds us, had much in common with that of the Christian Social party of the 1890's. Nearly two centuries after Abraham's death, Karl Lueger, Christian Socialist mayor of Vienna, pursued a policy that certainly would have met with the monk's approval: ostensibly aimed at protecting the "little man" from exploitation, especially from "Jewish" high finance, it did not attempt to change society at its roots. Even though Lueger was not directly influenced by the 17th-century demagogue, the actions of the two provide significant parallels, particularly in the baiting of "eggheads" and Jews.

Sonnenfels is the antithesis of Abraham a Sancta Clara to the extent that he did make an honest effort to rid himself of prejudice (indeed, much of his writing appeared under the pseudonym, *"Der Mann ohne Vorurteil"*). Yet Sonnenfels was as much a product of his rationalistic, "liberal" age as the monk was of the Counter-Reformation. He was the grandson of a chief rabbi of Brandenburg and son of a convert to Catholicism, Lipman Wiener, who, taking the name of Aloys Wiener, taught Semitic languages at the University of Vienna, and acted as Hebrew interpreter at the juridical court. Knighted, Aloys Wiener became Aloys von Sonnenfels; his two sons were led to the baptismal font at an early age, but his wife refused to forsake Judaism.

Kann gives us a complete biography of the more important of the two sons, Joseph von Sonnenfels who, during his long life—he lived to be eighty-five—served as profes-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sor of political science at the University of Vienna, as rector magnificus, and finally as president of the Academy of Sciences. Though some of the causes he sponsored must be called progressive—such as his fight to bring about the abolition of torture, or his efforts in behalf of educating women—he was at the same time a glorifier of an enlightened brand of Absolutism, and deeply devoted to the most un-liberal Empress Maria Theresa, who received her court Jews only behind a screen so as not to be sullied by their presence. Yet she was very fond of the "Nikolsburg Jew," as Sonnenfels' numerous enemies called the convert, referring to the small Moravian town where he was born.

Sonnenfels' story, as given impartially by Kann, shows the merits and the shortcomings of both the man and his age. He was a well-educated, gifted dilettante with a strong reformist zeal, and a skillful and courageous journalist; but he also was a stubborn, arrogant, and vain man. Kann can write harshly that the Austrian was "at heart a pedant who at certain points sacrificed common sense, warmth of feeling, and individualism to an artificially created monster of reason." Yet Kann, tracing Sonnenfels' errors to the *Zeitgeist,* is certainly more charitable than was the late Hans Tietze who, in his history of Vienna's Jewry, had only words of denigration for Sonnenfels: "He forgot his Judaism as he forgot his mother [Perlin Lipman's wife, who refused conversion, is ignored in the writings of her famous son]. With both feet he jumped into general humanitarianism." A true child of enlightenment, Sonnenfels did not have to jump: he stood firmly on both feet in an era which claimed to have discovered a total panacea in the universal and everlasting laws of reason. Like Abraham a Sancta Clara, he was a prisoner of his age.

Dr. Kann is, perhaps, given a bit too much to a mechanistic interpretation of history; he ascribes all important decisions to economic or political necessity. For just as humanitarian sentiments played a great role in Sonnenfels' attempts at reform, so noble motifs were present in the decision of Emperor Joseph II—the son of, and successor to, Maria Theresa, and the only Hapsburg to figure prominently in this book—to promulgate the famous *Toleranzpatent.* But Professor Kann somehow suppresses the humanistic note when he describes Jewish emancipation in Austria as primarily "a social measure for the purpose of raising the status of the nonprivileged and wiping out of the entity a separate social group whose pitiable plight was in direct contrast to the leveling objectives of rational absolutism." Like Sonnenfels, Joseph II, a beneficiary, in fact, of the intellectual climate introduced by Sonnenfels, was emotionally as high-pitched as the arch-conservative Abraham a Sancta Clara. The decline of liberalism toward the end of the 19th century—to the extent that it appeared contemptible to the Pan-German, Georg von Schoenerer, and to the master of the Christian Social party, Karl Lueger, and, more significantly, to their "pupil," young Adolf Hitler—was largely the result of the loss of not only its idealism but also its fighting spirit.

ADOLF HITLER'S cynical attitude toward liberalism and all it stood for manifested itself as early as 1906. Professor Jenks, who writes lucidly on the various contributions Vienna made "to the production of the arch-nihilist of our day," argues that the Viennese experiences merely deepened the evil inclinations of the boy's soul, that he had already arrived from Linz as a confirmed anti-Semite and despiser of the proletarians. The logical political choice of the impecunious young man, however, was the Social Democratic party, which was as yet an opposition group. It was led by the idealist Victor Adler, the scion of a wealthy Jewish family who had become a physician of the poor, and then a political leader. But Hitler soon became alienated from the party, rejecting it because Marxist leaders in Austria were Jewish and, therefore, as he later put it, "the seducers of our people." Dr. Jenks's study makes it clear that the young Hitler also resented Marxism because his hoped-for status as an artist, as an individual lifted high above the masses, was threatened by an immersion in the Socialist mass party. In *Mein Kampf* he characterized the Social Democratic party as "a pestilential whore covered with the mask of social virtue and brotherly love."

For a while Hitler came to admire first Karl Lueger, and then Georg von Schoenerer. But he soon became disillusioned with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these two: Lueger's anti-Semitism was not sufficiently radical, and the aristocratic Pan-German, von Schoenerer, did not include the numerical importance of the broad masses in his calculations.

Neither Sonnenfels nor Abraham a Sancta Clara are mentioned in Dr. Jenks's book. Yet it is worthwhile to compare Hitler with these two other figures who played such considerable roles in the political life of Central Europe. Ulrich Megerlin and Hitler had much in common. Their prejudices and superstitions are obvious parallels, as are the loquacious and bombastic styles of their speeches. But there are further similarities. Just as Dr. Kann points out that the monk, though living in the 17th century, was unaware of Bacon, Descartes, Leibniz, and Spinoza, so Dr. Jenks stresses the fact that Hitler was not at all familiar with any of the numerous new intellectual and artistic trends that filled Vienna in the years from 1906–1913. Both the Swabian and the rabble-rouser from Braunau were decidedly anti-intellectual.

Sonnenfels, on the other hand, strove hard to be up-to-date in every way, and, perhaps, sinned in the direction of trying to encompass more than he could handle. Nevertheless, he and the Hapsburg, Joseph II, created what might be called a "liberal" climate: many of their reforms would be endorsed readily by 20th-century liberals. It was the world's misfortune that what Hitler picked up in Vienna was not this liberal tradition as exemplified by Adler, Pernerstorfer, Ofner, and others, but the poison of those who wanted all progressive teachers to be fired and all Jews to be drowned—germs that found a likely agent and eventually led to megalomaniacal acts culminating in the destruction of millions.

Social Class, Individual Character

INNER CONFLICT AND DEFENSE. By DANIEL R. MILLER and GUY E. SWANSON. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 452 pp. $6.95.

Reviewed by KENNETH KENISTON

IT WAS Marx who in 1846 ridiculed the view of "Man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality and subsists only in the realm of philosophical fantasy." Since then, the influence of class on character, ideology, and style has been continually argued, though seldom demonstrated or explained with exactness. Indeed, the lack in Marxism —and most sociological theories—of any but a rudimentary account of the workings of personality makes its impossible to do much more than assume that some kind of "reflection" is going on, whereby individuals "reflect" either their social class, the productive process, or whatever else the prime influence is said to be.

Fifty years after 1846, Freud and his followers began to develop what has proven to be our most fruitful account of personality. To be sure this theory—with its aristocratic, value-maintaining superego, its bourgeois, practical-minded ego, and its proletarian, pleasure-seeking id—may itself have "reflected" the class structure of the time. But perhaps because of their own predominantly middle-class background and clientele, psychoanalysts until recently have attached far more importance to individual slips and falls along a predetermined psychosexual ladder than to the possibility that different social or cultural backgrounds might involve still other ladders. Emphasizing biologically determined sequences of development, most versions of psychoanalysis have remained theories of "Man in general, who belongs to no class," while on the other hand, many latter-day sociologists have agreed with Marx that such a man subsisted only in fantasy, and all the theories about him are themselves reflections of more basic social positions.

In the past twenty years these two streams of thought have moved closer. Within psychoanalysis, interest in defenses and "character" has grown, and with it has developed the possibility of studying non-pathological characteristics in large populations. Cultural anthropologists have tried to apply Freud to tribes from Seattle to Samoa, and have gained a greater awareness of the importance of "culture" in personality development. Meanwhile, social psychology has burgeoned, and with it has begun the search for concepts that will bridge the theoretical gap between "Man-in-general" and the complex stratifications of men in society. Epidemiological studies have shown that lower-class areas produce more schizophrenic disorders than middle-class districts, where depressive

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

psychoses predominate; and social anthropologists working in American communities have mapped the differences in outlook, child-rearing practices, behavior, and style of life among the social classes they differentiated. But perhaps because most American social scientists mean so much less by "social class" than did Marx, we have lacked careful empirical studies demonstrating exactly how and why class affects character—until Miller and Swanson's *Inner Conflict and Defense*.

THE MAIN thesis of this highly technical book is, stated simply, that both child-rearing practices and class position have visible effects on expressive style, defense mechanisms, and moral standards—in short, on character. Miller and Swanson argue that class affects character in two ways. In the first place, they reason that because a child's "character" is determined by the way he is brought up and, further, because there exists ample evidence indicating the class differences in child-training methods, character patterns should differ therefore along class lines. Here, psychoanalytic hypotheses about the links between childhood experience and personality, should suffice to explain class differences. But Miller and Swanson go on to argue that the same child-rearing technique will often have *different* effects, depending on the class in which it is used. In such instances, no Man-in-general theory of the relationship between upbringing and character will explain class differences: class position itself becomes a necessary explanatory principle.

Thus some of Miller and Swanson's findings, as they themselves point out, can be explained on the basis of child-rearing techniques alone, without recourse to any notion of social class. For example, in their studies of expressive style, they found that middle-class children tend to solve problems conceptually, whereas working-class children are more likely to approach them through physical activity. This difference can be explained easily by child-rearing practices. The middle-class parents with conceptual children are the *same* parents who use psychological (and not corporal) discipline, who retain their self-control with their children, and who give frequent rewards. The parents of working-class children—who try to solve problems through physical activity—use child-training methods which encourage this approach. One, therefore, can explain class differences in expressive style by a Man-in-general theory of the effects of child-rearing.

But Miller and Swanson's studies of defensive preferences also suggest that class by itself, unmediated by class differences in child-training, influences character. To establish this point, they begin by distinguishing two "families" of defenses, the first of which is characterized by the "obliteration of objective events and the substitution for them of more tolerable fantasies"; severe distortions, social difficulties, and disorders like schizophrenia are related to this family. The second family of defenses includes only relatively minor changes in some aspect of the person's needs; defenses of this type, like displacement and the turning of hostility against the self, require less extensive distortions and create fewer or no social difficulties.

The authors find that working-class children tend to favor the first family of defenses, and middle-class children the second; but that class differences in child-rearing do *not* suffice to explain this selective preference. That is, there exists no class difference in *child-rearing* which will account for the severely distorting defenses of working-class children and the more "adaptive" defenses of middle-class children. Unlike differences in expressive style, class position alone appears to account for class differences in the use of defenses. Miller and Swanson note that the working class experiences greater hardships than the middle class—lower economic rewards and greater pressures to violate moral standards. These hardships, they imply, make it more difficult for the working-class child to utilize the "adaptive" defenses of his middle-class schoolmates.

THE DOUBLE connection between class and character is probably even closer than Miller and Swanson's difficult and sophisticated research techniques would imply. Their methodological scruples led them to select Detroit junior high school boys for their study in a way so as to minimize difference between the working and the middle class: thus, they eliminated working-class boys

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who came from broken homes, immigrant, or non-North European families, probably leaving themselves with a working-class group relatively similar to the middle class. Furthermore, their complex techniques for measuring defensive preference, expressive style, and moral standards are (as they point out) far from perfect; and (as they modestly do *not* point out) the inevitable imperfections of the social scientist's techniques may lead him to *under*estimate the real relationships between the variables he studies. Indeed, when one considers the enormous methodological problems Miller and Swanson faced (and describe in great technical detail) in trying to measure such elusive concepts as defense mechanism or class position, it seems remarkable that so many significant differences did trickle through the distorting inaccuracies of their (as any) classifications and tests.

Miller and Swanson also studied the differences between "entrepreneurial" and "bureaucratic" families. In an earlier book, *The Changing American Parent,* they had argued that the older patterns of individual entrepreneurship are giving way to an emerging bureaucratic type of organization, characterized by the integration of functions performed by specialists. Class differences exist among children from both bureaucratic and entrepreneurial families, but the authors found that "Among the bureaucratic subjects, the differences between classes tend to be minimal. . . ."

There is thus a double irony in Miller and Swanson's work. First, though they start from a highly psychoanalytic outlook (Marx is never cited), some of their findings support Marx's critique of theories of "Man-in-general, who belongs to no class." To be sure, the connection between class and character in Detroit turns out to be far more complex and far less invariant than Marx would have had it, yet the fact remains that class position accounts for character differences which child-rearing techniques cannot explain. The second irony is that after clearly demonstrating the influence of class on character, Miller and Swanson go on to suggest that this influence is decreasing: "The number of jobs in bureaucratic settings . . . will probably continue to [increase]. . . . It seems probable that status in a particular class will become decreasingly important as time passes and bureaucratization progresses." It may be that just when the influence of class on character begins to be clearly demonstrated and explained, it will cease to operate: Marx was necessary to understand the entrepreneur, but perhaps Freud will suffice for the new bureaucrat.

Guidebook to Modern Jewry

THE JEWS IN OUR TIME. By NORMAN BENTWICH. Penguin Books. 176 pp. 95¢.

Reviewed by LUCY S. DAWIDOWICZ

NORMAN BENTWICH'S survey of the modern Jewish scene is the second "original" devoted to Jewish matters to be issued by the English publishing house of Penguin Books; last year they brought out a historical survey, Isadore Epstein's *Judaism.* The publication by Penguin—noted for its serious, even scholarly, titles—of these two volumes, would seem to be another indication of a widespread intellectual interest in Jewish life, based on the belief that a knowledge of its past character and present tendencies is worth the attention of the educated man. On Jewish life in the modern world, Penguin could scarcely have found a more knowledgeable writer than Norman Bentwich. From 1918–1931 he served as attorney-general in the civil government of Palestine, and for the following twenty years was a professor of international relations at the Hebrew University. He was also the director of the High Commission for German Refugees in London during the 1930's, and since 1948 has been the chairman of the United Restitution Office. In all, he has written some twenty books on Jewish subjects, ranging from Hellenistic Judaism to Palestine-Israel.

The Jews in Our Time, like most of Bentwich's works, is addressed to a popular audience. And the weakness in the apparatus of its scholarship is evident in the total absence of sources or bibliography, and in the far from adequate index. There are mistakes in names, and important content has been omitted from the discussion at some points. Elsewhere, Bentwich tends to exaggerate the significance of certain ideological conceptions—belied, in fact, by his own observations. Nevertheless, the general problem of

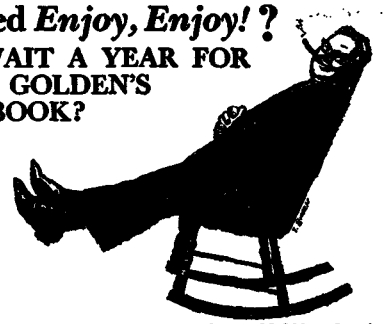
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the non-technical survey is solved remarkably well by the author. *The Jews in Our Time* is a model of effective condensation, distinguished by a notable grace of style. The historical introduction telescopes the background story from Abraham to the State of Israel in some fifty pages, with a fairly dazzling virtuosity.

Bentwich's perspective is essentially a contemporary one, with Western Jewry in the foreground. Intended primarily for the British reader, the book devotes twice as much space to the development of Jewish life in England as to East European Jewish history up to 1939. Bentwich tells us where the Jews live today throughout the world: describing their socio-economic status and their relations with their non-Jewish neighbors, their intellectual and religious life, and their attitude toward Israel. Depicting the Jews as a national-ethnic group, with diminishing religious content, he shows that their position on the margins of society has enhanced their contribution to the intellectual life and economic development of the countries in which they live. Bentwich seems pleased with much of what he sees in Jewish life today: an established Jewish state and a prosperous Jewish Diaspora of high intellectual stature—here of course he is considering mainly British and American Jewry. The dark side of the picture is that of Russian Jewry and the shadow that was cast across all Jewish life by the German genocide. Thus Bentwich's little book becomes a serviceable guide—for Jew or Gentile—to some measure of understanding the present Jewish situation against the background of the Enlightenment, anti-Semitism and Nazism, and Jewish nationalism.

Moreover this Penguin serves, I think, as a necessary corrective to Epstein's *Judaism* (which according to Penguin's latest ad, is its 29th best-seller among American college students). Despite Epstein's credentials (he is a rabbi, with doctorates in philosophy and literature, the principal of Jews' College in London—Britain's rabbinical seminary—and editor of Soncino's 36-volume Babylonian Talmud in English), it is unfortunate that his has become the paperback which tells the world about Judaism. His point of view is fundamentalist and Halachic—he devotes in all a mere thirty-five pages to Judaism after the Enlightenment. Fortunately then, for Penguin readers, Bentwich has reversed Epstein's emphasis: telling us what the Jews are, as against what they should be, according to Epstein's literal reading of the Bible and atavistic approach to Jewish law.

Finished *Enjoy, Enjoy!*?
WHY WAIT A YEAR FOR HARRY GOLDEN'S NEXT BOOK?



Subscribe to *The Carolina Israelite* (now 55,089 subscriptions) . . . America's most widely read, and most widely quoted personal journal. For you: $3 year. For your friends: $3 year. *The Carolina Israelite*, 1512 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte, North Carolina.

NORMAN BENTWICH has described himself in his autobiography as *A Wanderer Between Two Worlds*, thus emphasizing in the title his passage from the Victorian world to the modern, and calling attention to the special meaning of his career. Dedicated all his life to Zionism, he has nevertheless chosen to think of himself, as a Jew, in this ambivalent way, and the same ambivalence is reflected in his present book. Much as Bentwich loves and admires Israel, he cannot conceive of a world without a Jewish Diaspora, of a civilized society without benefit of individual Jewish powers of mind and spirit. "Jewish dissimilation," Bentwich writes, "is as important for the well-being of the whole society as Jewish assimilation." The creation of Israel cannot mean the eventual disappearance of a Jewish Diaspora, Bentwich says, emphasizing that "since the First Captivity, dispersion has been an essential quality of the Jewish people." Bentwich, a disciple of Ahad Ha-am, holds the view—popular today among many Zionists who once repudiated it—that Israel may become a great spiritual center with a message for all the world: "If that message is given, Greater Jewry, distributed over all parts of the globe, will be linked by a chain of the spirit with Israel, and will strengthen their attachment to a Judaism revived and reinvigorated by the influences that come again from Jerusalem."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nevertheless, it must be said—against the optimism that pervades Bentwich's little book—that today, under conditions of material well-being, there is relatively little creative Jewish life in the Diaspora. Individual Jews contribute richly to the culture of the nations. But, despite the unprecedented multiplication of institutions and organizations, synagogue membership and Jewish school enrollment—Jewish communal and religious life remains essentially inert. Nor do there seem to be any stirrings of Jewish creativity in Israel that could have meaning for the Diaspora. Of course Israeli culture must, naturally and inevitably, develop in different directions from the Jewish past. Bentwich himself describes the alienation of the sabra from the past of two thousand years, and the efforts of the Israeli Ministry of Education to remedy the situation with courses in Jewish Consciousness. But it will take more than that to bring about a true cultural interchange between Israel and the Diaspora.

The Path to Auschwitz

THE LAST OF THE JUST. By ANDRÉ SCHWARZ-BART. Translated by Stephen Becker. Atheneum. 374 pp. $4.95.

Reviewed by THEODORE SOLOTAROFF

AT one point in *The Last of the Just* the main figure, young Ernie Levy, says of the reports about the Nazi extermination camps —" 'But the stories they tell are too much for the human spirit.' " André Schwarz-Bart's first novel is itself such a story. Clumsily organized in places and unsteady in tone, it is still a wholly shattering account of modern Jewish persecution in which the narration of the ultimate horrors of the death train and the gas chambers are but a final assault upon the reader, whose spirit has long since begun to recoil, choked alternately by pity and hatred. The literature of moral horror has been with us for many years now; by his steady exposure to it, the reader learns to keep his nerve, to ride with the blows, to stay out of the shoes of the more intolerable victims. But against Schwarz-Bart's austere and tender evocation of the impossible life of a sensitive young German Jew between the years 1935–1942, there are no defenses that work. Partly this is because of Schwarz-Bart's grasp of the little details of sadism: the drops of blood on the ears of a child who had not removed her earrings quickly enough. Partly it is because of the author's precise psychological notation of prolonged violence and terror, as he takes the reader through the subtle stages of the victim's resistance, acquiescence, and final crumbling. Even more pertinent, perhaps, is the reader's constant awareness that Schwarz-Bart—himself the sole survivor in his family of the period he describes—has faked nothing and held himself back from nothing: that he has not only written his book but suffered its writing, and that his invention and vision are in reality his attempt to re-experience and fathom that nightmare which most Jews have put aside. When he pauses four pages from the end to say suddenly, "I am so weary that my pen can no longer write," or when he tells us, in the final paragraph, "Yesterday, as I stood in the street trembling in despair, rooted to the spot . . ."—there is nothing gauche or corny about it; a note is struck that seems as heartbreakingly true as any of the depictions of his characters' pathos. Finally, of course, the shock of the book comes from feelings in ourselves, rudely awakened now from fifteen years of easy forgiving and forgetting.

It may seem curious, then, that the controversy over *The Last of the Just* which went on for many weeks in France should have revolved largely around such academic questions as whether or not its young author was guilty of certain plagiarisms, or factual inaccuracies, or distortions of Jewish theology. Also brought into dispute was the reductive answer formulated by Schwarz-Bart to the timeless question of what it means to be a Jew. There was the question, too, of the intrinsic literary worth of the novel—whether *The Last of the Just* is not, after all, simply the inspired effort of a beginner who is, alas, probably on his way to becoming a popular novelist. To the reader who has come fresh from the book itself all these matters seem utterly beside the point. If there is a point one wants to discuss, it is that millions of defenseless men and women and children lived and died horribly after the Western democracies had declined the chance to take them in. On this side, the American review-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers have welcomed the novel with the sponge-like imperturbability of their trade and, clearly, with that state of mind which has been bemused in America by images of busy new German factories and sleek German cities arising "miraculously" from the rubble.

In any case, *The Last of the Just* brings home for the first time in fiction, as far as I know, some sense of the enormity of what the Jews in Europe suffered; and it does this with a remarkable degree of dramatic coherence—that is to say, probability. Without such probability, the tragedy of the European Jews reduces to pathos: in its pure form, the pathos of *The Diary of Anne Frank,* in its impure form, that of *The Wall.* For it is mainly pathos that is evoked when the Jews are depicted as normal people confronted by an extraordinarily abnormal adversary. But Schwarz-Bart never forgets for a moment that he is writing about a people who still bore the psychic bruises and scars of their abnormal history. Thus, almost as much as it is anything else, *The Last of the Just* is a study of the psychology of the persecuted; and it is through his probing of this subject that the author creates much of the novel's tragic power and assigns much of its meaning.

THE SIX million are represented for the most part by a single family of Eastern European immigrants to Germany who meet the new oppressions of the 1930's with their old habits of acquiescence as well as of endurance, and with their tradition of transcending what they must suffer. The tradition of the Levy family relates to the legend of the Thirty-six Just Men, the *Lamed-Vov,* upon whom in each generation the world reposes. Adapting the legend to serve as his leading motif, Schwarz-Bart depicts the Lamed-Vov as supporting the world by absorbing all its ills and griefs. "For the Lamed-Vov are the hearts of the world multiplied, and into them, as into one receptacle, pour all our griefs." Without them, Schwarz-Bart says, "humanity would suffocate with a single cry." With them, life can go on and God can continue to bear the ordeal of looking on the world. Also the legend says that the *Lamed-Vovnik* comes forth in times of Jewish adversity not only to suffer but to assist and console.

An explosive report on the Cuban revolution from the Cubans' point of view

One man's outspoken opinion about what's really going on in Cuba, as compared to what the American press has reported. C. Wright Mills presents the Cubans' uncensored opinions of American "imperialism", American business interests, Communist aid, the possibility of a counter-revolution, our naval base at Guantanamo, agrarian reform, Castro, and many other central issues.

LISTEN, YANKEE

By C. WRIGHT MILLS
Author of *The Power Elite*
Hardbound edition, $3.95, published by
McGRAW-HILL
Paperbound edition, 50¢, published by
BALLANTINE BOOKS

Young Ernie Levy is the modern Lamed-Vovnik of a family which has for eight centuries been given the grimly Jewish honor of producing one "man of sorrows" in each generation. The novel begins with the first one of the family—the martyred Yom Tov Levy—who in 1185 at York sacrificed a large flock of followers and then himself rather than submit to the Archbishop's demand that they convert. The long opening section of the book carries the Levy lineage forward, as the wave of Jewish persecutions rolls back and forth across the English Channel and then begins its slow movement east, finally depositing the Levys and their Lamed-Vovnik in a little village in Poland. There the family stays put through three generations of relative peace in which the persecutions are merely economic ones, before the wave resumes again, this time pushing the Jews westward. Fleeing from the Polish pogroms of 1918, the Levys come to the German town

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Stillenstadt. Here Ernie grows up, while anti-Semitism in the town swells to the tidal proportions that will drive the family into France before it overtakes them again and finally destroys them completely.

The effect of using the legend of a family of martyrs in this way is to collapse the history of European Jewry into the record of its persecution, of which Ernie Levy's death at Auschwitz represents the apocalyptic climax. Thus behind the Nazi genocides is made to stand the central explanation, at least for Schwarz-Bart, of the last ten centuries of Jewish history. More crucially, the function of the legend is to invoke the psychology of the Jew as Europe's scapegoat. As it re-enacts itself through Ernie's childhood in Stillenstadt—through the beatings he accepts, his acts of blind heroism, his attempts at self-torture and then at suicide in the hope that these will "save" his family—the legend of the Man of Sorrows is made by Schwarz-Bart to articulate all the different impulses by which the boy (and the community of Jews whose psychology he embodies) is able to give himself up so defenselessly to his persecutors. It is here that the novel derives much of its force: in the detailed projection of what the French-Jewish writer Emmanuel Berl calls "the connivance between killer and killed." The connivance is made even more explicit in Ernie's attraction to the Lorelei-figure of Ilse, who leads him from beating to beating at the hands of her muscular little boyfriends. Later in France, with his family already wiped out and he himself safe if miserable in the South, Ernie is drawn again into the pattern; he returns to Paris, falls in love, and follows his mistress Golda into a concentration camp; willingly he gives himself up to the same tortures he had experienced in Stillenstadt, and finally to the death which he had also very nearly succeeded in winning for himself there.

As Schwarz-Bart uses the legend of the Lamed-Vov to impose a dramatic order of probability upon the pathetic fate of the Polish Jews, he also finds in the legend the basis of Jewish transcendence that gives some measure of meaning to the endless senselessness of that fate. " 'Oh, Grandfather, tell me the truth!' " Ernie says to his grandfather during one of their discussions of their plight. " 'We aren't like other men are we?' " To which Mordecai Levy replies " 'Are we men?' " Years later, when Ernie hears that his family has been exterminated and turns from his role as their protector and curses God, he then becomes less than human, becomes in fact the Nazi idea of the Jew—that is, a dog. And when he returns to his faith as a Jew, he returns also to his Jewish fate—to the more than human aspect of what God requires not only from his "man of sorrows" but by the insistent implication of the legend from the Jews as a people as well.

The idea that Jewishness is defined by martyrdom, which the true Jew seeks as his secret *raison d'être,* may strike one as dubious—and even repellent. But there is also something to be said for its degree of truth. It is necessary to add that Schwarz-Bart only partly rests his book upon the reality of this idea, either for shaping his narrative, or interpreting it. If Ernie, and to a lesser extent Mordecai, are meant to exemplify the Jew as the "man of sorrows"—their Jewishness a martyrdom that absorbs the world's ills —they are also shown to be driven to their role by the unmitigated—the unmetaphysical—brutality of the Nazis. True, Ernie becomes an adept in the ways of self-torture and self-destruction—but mainly because of the horrors of the daily Jewish life of Stillenstadt, which in cities throughout Germany, as Schwarz-Bart tells us, drove hundreds of sensitive schoolboys, who were not the descendants of Yom Tov Levy, to suicide. Moreover, the position represented by Mordecai and Ernie is consistently undercut by the other Levys. Against the holy defenselessness of Ernie is placed his tough aggressive brother, who hits back; against the pious acquiescence of Mordecai is placed the cynical secularism of his own son, Ernie's father, and even more notably, the earthy and resourceful élan of the grandmother, who carries in her spirit the Jewish capacity to endure and survive. Similarly, Schwarz-Bart is willing to obscure the religious mean-

Your Book Published!

If we think your manuscript has unusual possibilities, we will offer you a straight royalty or reasonable subsidy basis. Send manuscript for free editorial report or write for Brochure CC.

Pageant Press, 101 Fifth Ave., New York 3, N.Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing of Ernie's surrender by showing it to be motivated most directly by his desire to share the fate of Golda—rather than of the Levy Lamed-Vov. In other words, *The Last of the Just* is empowered and articulated not only by an ideology of Jewishness but also by the slowly accumulating spectacle of the impossible conditions of Jewish existence under the Nazis, and finally it is not the martyrdom of his people that haunts Schwarz-Bart and his reader but the sense of all that life abused, broken, and turned to ashes.

Recollections of a British Zionist

A NATION REBORN. By RICHARD H. S. CROSSMAN. Atheneum. 171 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by WALTER SCHWARZ

WHEN the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry landed in Palestine in 1946, Chaim Weizmann referred to the "excellent men" like Richard Crossman who were on it. Crossman was a Labor M.P., picked for the commission job by Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, and hence, one would imagine, without any particular bias in favor of Zionism. But Crossman was also an intellectual—an assistant editor of the *New Statesman,* an extramural lecturer at Oxford, and a noted writer on political theory—and he went singularly well-equipped, having first visited Dachau. Now, almost fifteen years later, Crossman tells us that his involvement with Palestine was "the most thrilling and probably the most useful episode in my political life." In the years since, he has even become something of a Zionist's Zionist: this book (an enlargement of three Chaim Weizmann Memorial Lectures which Crossman gave in Israel) is essentially a specialist's work. It takes fundamentals for granted and grapples beguilingly with such problems as Weizmann's relation with the British, what went wrong with the Mandate, and where Ben Gurion's Israel now stands vis-à-vis England.

Although the book is subtitled *The Israel of Weizmann, Bevin and Ben Gurion,* it is in fact less about Israel than about the British: Crossman's excuse for lecturing the Israelis about themselves is based not so much on what he knows as on what he is. The British Gentile Zionist is essentially a romantic—like the British Arabist. The appeal of the Arab for the British is in his primitiveness, his independence and inferiority; the Jew is cherished by the British Zionist because he was promised something both by God and by Balfour. There, however, the romantic impulses diverge, for the pro-Zionist is a radical; at a time when the Palestine issue was still open, he chose the whole-hog solution of Jewish statehood, while others fussed about the consequences. The British pro-Zionist is also an intellectual, with a feeling for history and a taste for argument—the Arabist is sentimental, with a hankering after *Realpolitik.* And while the Arabist simply moralizes, the pro-Zionist is, finally, an idealist, his vision is that of a great wrong righted, of a perfect culmination to the Jews' tragic history.

Not that anything of all this is alluded to in Crossman's book, but it is implicit in every line; what the author says is somehow less important than the sturdy British emo-

JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

A Quarterly Devoted to Intellectual and Cultural History

CONTENTS OF

Vol. XXII January-March 1961 Number 1

Extradeical and Intradeical Interpretations of Platonic Ideas ..... Harry A. Wolfson
Religion and Modern Individualism .... H. Butterfield
The Religious Conscience in Lord Acton's Political Thought ..... J. S. Nurser
Individualism in Jean Jaures' Socialist Thought ..... Aaron Noland
The Mystical Origins of National Socialism ..... George L. Mosse
The Opium Addiction of Marcus Aurelius ..... Thomas W. Africa
Richard Bentley and the Innate Idea of God: A Correction ..... Constance I. Smith
The Concept of Absolute Space ... James A. Gould
John Dewey at Johns Hopkins (1882-1884) ..... George Dykhuizen
Crocker's "Age of Crisis" ..... Reviewed by Harcourt Brown

Forthcoming:
Merle Curti on Jane Addams' View of Human Nature

Subscription Rates: $6 a year;
$1.75 single copy, payable to:

Journal of the History of Ideas
The City College
Box 285, N.Y.C. 31

Gift Subscriptions receive special attention

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions that inform it. Thus in discussing Weizmann, Crossman appears a little put out with his hero for not being much of a socialist—indeed for being a bit of an imperialist. At the same time, he sees that this very contradiction in Weizmann gave him his special force. The problem of personal power and influence is of particular fascination for Crossman, and his browsing in the Weizmann Memorial Institute have yielded a scholarly and convincing picture of how Weizmann wielded such power: first in bringing about the Balfour Declaration in 1917, and again thirty years later in precipitating the partition vote at the United Nations.

Crossman's thesis about the Mandate is that it failed not in its administrators or on minor policy errors, but because it came to represent an unworkable clash of obligations. Only in the 1920's, and once again in 1945, might Jewish numbers have been vigorously and quickly built up (under a non-Jewish Governor, not Sir Herbert Samuel); but on the first occasion the Russian Revolution intervened to stop the flow of immigrants, and on the second the obstacle was Ernest Bevin and the entrenched Arabists in Whitehall. Thereafter, conflict was inevitable: the spirit of the age was for national self-determination, not imposed solutions, and no one in authority regarded the Jews as a nation at the time. Ernest Bevin, whose paranoia about Jewish influence Crossman charts with perspicacity, became so caught up in the web of his own policy that there was no going back even when its futility was obvious to him. All this is convincing because Crossman's sense of history is informed by intuition. He does not even mind letting his sensibilities outrun his affiliations: his intense preoccupation with British "obligations" overseas is rare in a Laborite.

Crossman leaves us perhaps a little too unworried about Israel. He is proud of it—as the only stable democracy planted since the war—and he cannot resist a footnote to the effect that the first clerk of the Knesset borrowed his copy of Erskine May (the famous textbook on British parliamentary procedure) and has not yet returned it. We are left by Crossman with a feeling that Israel is a job done—instead of an adventure whose ultimate success is even now not assured.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Dennis H. Wrong, a frequent contributor to Commentary, teaches sociology at Brown.

Alfred Werner is an art critic who also has written widely on Central European affairs.

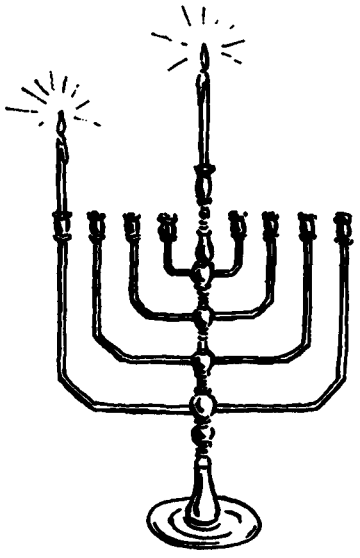
Kenneth Keniston is a member of the department of Social Relations at Harvard.

Lucy S. Dawidowicz has written on a wide range of topics that concern Jewish life.

Theodore Solotaroff is an associate editor of Commentary.

Walter Schwarz is an editor of the British periodical *West Africa*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



FOR

Hanukkah

serving
and giving

the most cherished whisky

More people buy and enjoy the superior quality of Seagram's V.O. than any other imported whisky.

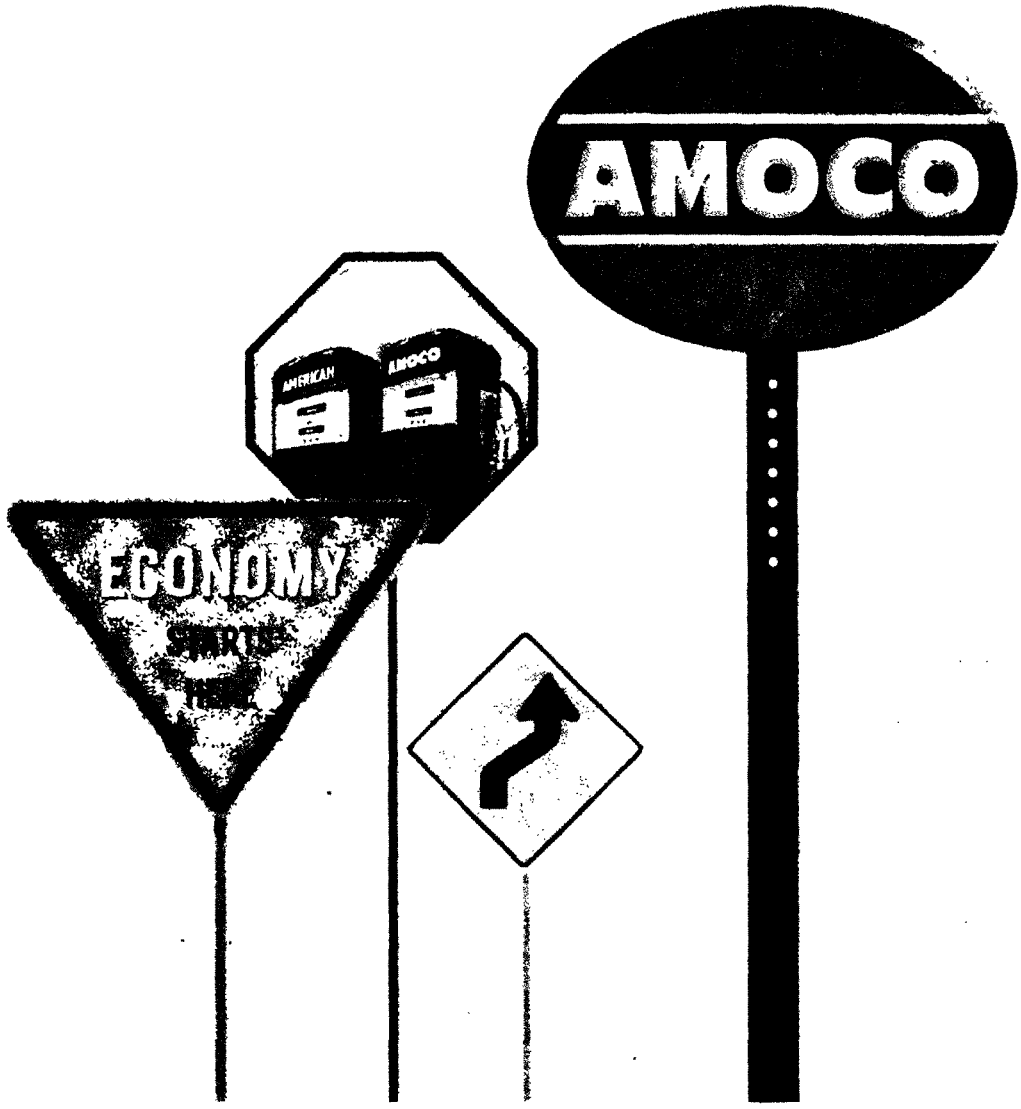
SEAGRAM'S IMPORTED

VO

KNOWN BY THE COMPANY IT KEEPS

CANADIAN WHISKY • A BLEND OF RARE SELECTED WHISKIES • THIS WHISKY IS SIX YEARS OLD • 86.6 PROOF

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Economy starts here because, of all the premium gasolines, only Amoco-Gas contains no lead. With lead-free Amoco, you eliminate the cause of up to 8 out of 10 spark plug failures. Pistons and valves keep their rhythm—unhampered by crusty lead deposits. Your engine runs clean . . . purrs with full power. You save on tune-ups and repairs. You preserve the life of your car. You get more for your gasoline dollar with premium Amoco-Gas. Try it!

©American Oil Company

P. S. Use a regular? Get the "Best of the Regulars," American Gas . . . formulated to give you top miles per gallon . . . yours at regular gas price!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED